New Republic

December 9, 1946 • Fifteen Cents

Coal Strike: The Big Freeze

Housing: There Still Isn't Any

Empire: The Navy Wants One

Disarmament: Hope Is in Sight

Christmas: Who Can Afford It?

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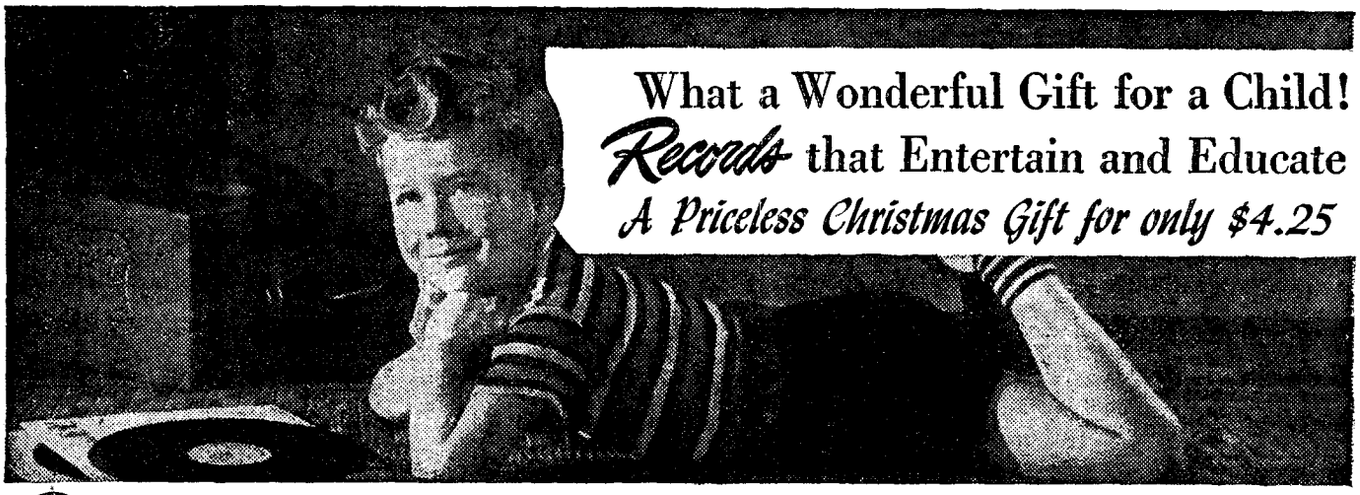

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. 115, NO. 23 NEW YORK, MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1946 NUMBER 1671

No Roofs, No Ceilings, No Coal

White-Tie Winter

Washington

THE GOLD PLATE and the crystal are glittering again on immaculate linen in the state dining room of the White House. Under the tight-lipped portrait of Calvin Coolidge, the scarlet-coated Marine band provides incidental dinner music. The war is over. The tight-belt austerities are gone. The first formal White House social season since 1939 is under way.

The war is over, but the problems it left unsolved remain. At the first formal diplomatic dinner, five seats down to the right of President Truman, sits grave Dr. Oscar Lange, the ambassador of a new Poland. Far to the President's left sits Povilas Zadeikis, the ambassador of a Lithuania that is extinct but is still recognized by the United States. And in the middle—almost symbolically—sits Harry Truman, the President of the United States, relaxed, unworried, cordial to Lange, warm to Zadeikis.

This is only the beginning. Many times this winter the President will don his white tie (and he wears it with a flair), and Mrs. Truman her black velvet and tulle, to play host to the diplomats, the military men, the judges and the legislators who do their work in Washington. All the old formalities are back—it must be a relief to the President to take refuge in rules and procedures of protocol, where no decisions need be made and a handshake with a diplomat is prescribed in advance by Stanley Woodward, the State Department protocol chief.

The first diplomatic dinner set the pattern. There were the Madison silver-gilt candelabra and epergnes, the Teddy Roosevelt silver cutlery which had been dipped in gold by Florence Klinge Harding, the Franklin Roosevelt Lennox china (with the Roosevelt three-feather crest) and the Roosevelt crystal. And in the East Room, where the introductions are first made among the assembling guests, George and Martha Washington stare soberly down from their portraits.

Washington is digging out the tail-coats and bringing the décolleté evening gowns out of the cedar closets. There was a conclusive war and there will be an inconclusive peace, but the formalities survive.

Soft Coal, Hard Times

Washington

JOHN L. LEWIS' coal strike has already given rise to pressures in the American economy that will increase the nation's postwar economic headache. With demand for inadequate supplies pushing prices higher in some segments of the economy, organized labor was stirring uneasily. Ballooning prices meant another wave of wage demands, perhaps another round of work stoppages. Summed up, the coal strike was inflationary at a time when most prices were already in the clouds.

Some economists took the silver-lining-to-every-cloud brand of reasoning. Although the American economy, like the man in the old joke, was hitting its head against a concrete wall, wouldn't it feel good when it stopped? Such experts argued that if the coal strike tied up production for a considerable period, its end would bring a boom in demand that would postpone this spring's expected recession.

Aside from such Pollyanna talk, the economic outlook as a result of the coal strike is almost all black. Among the most serious effects:

Steel. This basic industry was hit by the strike almost immediately. There was only enough coal in the industry's stockpiles to keep the furnaces running at full blast for 30 days. By the end of the first week and a half of the strike, the industry was running at only 62 percent of capacity. The week before the strike was called saw the mills operating at 91.4 percent. This meant an immediate loss of 504,000 tons. About 100,000 men were laid off as operations slowed.

Railroads. If the strike should cut off the roads' supply of coal for as long as two months, about 86 percent of rail service would be at a standstill. A further complication is the fact that only a few industries have enough space to store goods which cannot be shipped.

Public Utilities. Loss or serious curtailment of electricity and gas would hit the individual early and hard. With the country's power plants dependent upon coal, and only enough on hand to keep them running at normal for about 30 days, the dimout ordered in 21 states was only the beginning. Industrial use of electricity in these states had been cut by 25 percent, but if the strike should run on for two months, more than 60 percent of the power plants would be forced to close down.

Food. The nation's fresh produce—oranges from Florida and California, potatoes from Maine and Idaho, green vegetables from the South, meat from the Middle West—moves mainly by rail.

As this was written, the coal strike added up to something that no one—miners, organized labor, consumers, the

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nation—could afford. Rumors circulated that Lewis and the coal operators were trying to reach an agreement. Just ahead was the January session of the Republican Eightieth Congress. If the strike were allowed to drag on, it was almost certain that out of that body would come a harder kind of settlement.

London Watches Lewis

London

LONDON is keenly interested in the outcome of the coal strike in the United States. Government spokesmen are too canny to show sympathy, but it would be strange if trade unionists here didn't quietly hope that American reactionaries will meet with a setback. This is in spite of the fact that a renewed production crisis in the United States will further reduce the already diminished purchasing power of the British loan.

Last week Sir Stafford Cripps glumly told the export conference organized by the Federation of British Industries, "We are rapidly spending our dollars from the loan and when these are spent there will be no more available except what we can earn. We are living to a large extent on loans from the United States and Canada. Half our imports come from North and South America, whereas only 14 percent of our exports go there. We must try to get near a balance, not only in our total trade but in our hard-currency trade as well.

"Unless we succeed in doing that in the next year or two, we shall find ourselves in the position of having to take some drastic action in order to carry on.

"I think you will reach the conclusion that to increase our exports to the Western Hemisphere is an objective of great importance."

Left Front For France?

Paris

TWO CONSECUTIVE elections which have reëstablished the Communists as the first party of France have also persuaded them that the time has come to seek power. They are determined to put their trademark on the Fourth Republic just as the Radical Socialists did on the Third. They insist that their party leader, Maurice Thorez, be named premier, or, alternatively, Marcel Cachin become President. They demand a 1946-model popular-front government. Unlike the 1936 government, this will have Communists instead of Socialists at the wheel.

To accomplish these ends the Communists have proposed a legislative program which is far from revolutionary. Thorez has reassured the Anglo-American press that the road to socialism is not necessarily by way of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Still more important from the political point of view is the Communist proposal to Socialists to join in a new united party, in which they retain parliamentary seniority. Many of Léon Blum's followers are succumbing to this siren call despite their original qualms.

The unity talks began this week and could easily end successfully. This attempt to form a solid Left is recognition that a solid Right has already taken shape in postwar France. In recent elections all parties of the Center and Right, even the resistance-born MRP, based their campaigns on a common anti-Communist platform. The MRP did better than expected because other more reactionary parties withdrew their own candidates in its favor.

The purposeful strategy of Duclos, Thorez and Cachin, at a time when France is discouragingly beset by shortages, debt, inflation, incredible bureaucracy and a lack of real government, gives the extreme Left a concrete chance to achieve its aims and bring to Western Europe a political pattern familiar in the Eastern zones. "Eventually," they say, "so why not now?"

Japs in Doubt

Tokyo

THE VIEW of Japan's unemployed diplomats on her international relationships—whenever she is permitted to have any—may be summed up by saying that this country intends to remain on the side of the angels.

The Japanese army gambled for big stakes and lost. The big stakes at present on this occupied island are that within 10 years Japan will evolve into a full-fledged appendage of the Western powers. As long as "coöperation with America and Britain is the patriotism"—to quote one poster recently displayed on Tokyo walls—Japan will sign on the dotted line and all will be smooth in the "so-polite Occupation."

While the same old leaders confidently blueprint the nation's future course, Japan's man and woman in the street seem to be reserving judgment about the much ballyhooed "political revolution." A recent public-opinion survey indicated that 93 percent of the little people think that democracy in Japan hasn't occurred yet and requires reconsideration; 79 percent think the big capitalists have not yet lost their hold on industry; 67 percent declared the present Diet does not represent the will of the people; and 36 percent do not believe the ultra-nationalists and "double patriots" have been rendered powerless to do future harm.

Opinion polls are new to Japan, but even allowing for a wide margin of error, the poll was significant as suggesting the existence of widespread skepticism.

"Pretty Rotten"

Washington

THANKSGIVING MORNING the Washington *Post* published the text of a letter written by Argentine President Peron to Andrew Jackson Higgins, the New Orleans shipbuilder. In it Peron said that if Spruille Braden, US Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, should "disappear from the scene, I think it would do away with the only problem that has ever existed and exists between our countries." Higgins had sent translations of the letter to several members of Congress, including Senators Vandenberg and Connally.

Here was a chance for the US to yell "intervention," a powerful argument among "Yankee Imperialism"-conscious South American republics. But at a news conference, acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson remarked aloofly that he did not think he should get into a debate with Peron.

Reached in New Orleans by the New York *Herald Tribune*, Higgins was reported at first to have denied that Braden was mentioned by name. When told by the reporter at the other end of the telephone that a photostatic copy of the letter had been published, Higgins is said to have paused, and then exploded, "Damn it, it's pretty rotten when you can't even send a confidential letter to people without having it printed all over."

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ANYTHING FOR A LAUGH

Housing: Poor Hope

Washington

FOR VETERANS, the housing front still looked grim. Representative Jesse P. Wolcott (R, Mich.), who axed housing legislation last year, will head the House Banking and Currency Committee next session. Last week he made it clear he isn't interested in pushing the Wagner-Ellender-Taft permanent-housing bill.

"There's no hurry on the W-E-T bill. As a matter of fact, there's a question as to the need for it at all," said Wolcott. He plans to push his own housing bill, unsuccessful while he was a minority member of the committee. Among other things, Wolcott's bill fails to provide for:

1. Creation of a unified housing agency, policy and program. (Wolcott's bill provides for the dissolution of the NHA and contemplates at least three separate housing agencies.)

2. A program for moderate-income families. (The W-E-T bill calls for supplemental FHA mortgage-insurance systems which would service the great mass of veterans and others in middle-income groups.)

3. Liberal mortgage terms for families undertaking non-profit mutual-ownership housing projects.

4. Low-rent housing and slum clearance for families whose incomes are so low that private enterprise cannot hope to service them.

5. Special loans for improvements to meet minimum health standards in rural homes.

6. Veterans' home ownership at a total monthly cost of from $35 to $40 and preferences for veterans on low-rent housing.

Progress Can Wait

Washington

REPUBLICANS now controlling Congress plan to do little next session about piled-up social legislation. This news came last week from Minnesota's young Republican Senator Joseph H. Ball.

The next session, Ball told reporters, would be devoted almost entirely to fiscal problems, including cutting the budget and taxes, curtailing war powers, revising labor laws and investigating the New Deal. National health, federal aid to education, housing and revision of the social-security law probably would have to wait, said the Senator.

Dear Senator . . .

Washington

THE ADMINISTRATION will give the universal-military-training proposal top priority over education in the next Congress.

The Bureau of the Budget made this clear last week. It wrote Senator Murray (D, Mont.) that his bill for a 10-year program of federal aid to state education systems, involving close to a billion dollars annually, must take second place:

". . . Serious budgetary situation in which we currently find ourselves . . . impossible at this time to consider favorably appropriations as large as those contemplated . . . drastic scaling down of the authorizations would be necessary . . . legislation authorizing federal aid for education generally should be deferred . . . considered in relation to the enactments respecting military training . . ."

Allis-Chalmers Strike

Milwaukee

THE SIX-MONTH-OLD United Automobile Workers' strike against Allis-Chalmers at West Allis, Wisconsin, is a classic example of the chaos created when a reactionary corporation management gets in a fight with a Communist-influenced union.

Few doubt that the leadership of Local 248 is substantially Communist, but the strike issues are strictly trade-union issues—union security, grievance procedure and rates. The company has crusaded against the leadership in published statements and disruptive direct appeals to the rank and file. No authorized management spokesman will claim that, if anti-Communists took over the local, the company's attitude on basic issues would be modified. Even the maintenance-of-membership clause, such as the union once held under a War Labor Board directive, is denounced as "un-American."

Some company officials realize they must anticipate dealing with the union

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in the future, but seem prepared to force the strikers back to work now on company terms.

Ball Recovers Fumble

Washington

A YEAR AGO Senator Joseph H. Ball thought labor could best be controlled by compulsory arbitration of disputes vitally affecting the public. This idea formed the heart of the Ball-Burton-Hatch bill. Today, the Minnesota Senator thinks that compulsory arbitration is "completely unworkable" and contrary to our system of society.

As the chief spokesman for Senate Republicans on labor legislation, Senator Ball wants to outlaw the closed shop. He tells friends that this will be the most popular of all his proposals for curbing labor's power. But Ball is full of other ideas. His first objective is to push through the Case bill, which was killed last year by a presidential veto. This measure would make unions subject to suits, would outlaw secondary boycotts and prohibit the unionization of foremen. Joe Ball thinks he can get it passed early in the next congressional session.

Then Ball plans to rewrite the Wagner Labor Relations Act, regarded by organized labor as its Magna Carta. That will take him some time. Still further in the future, the Senator says, is the establishment of labor courts to settle disputes in key industries. That will take two or three years, Ball believes, because it must be preceded by the enactment of a basic labor code setting up legal standards for such courts.

Last week he told a National Press Club audience that there must be more "equality of risk" in strikes. Apparently the employers are taking all of the risks; the unions, none.

Cold Turkey

New York

QUOTE of the week (Harold Kneeland in the Washington *Post*): "Thanksgiving was originated by the Pilgrims, who were the first Republicans. They sailed in on a flood tide and chased out the reds."

Things to Watch Out For

Conservative Republicans will mobilize to block confirmation of David E. Lilienthal and other progressives to the Atomic Energy Commission. Key to the outcome will be the position that Senator Vandenberg (R, Mich.), ranking Republican on the special Senate Committee on Atomic Energy, takes. If he goes along on Lilienthal, enough other Republicans will probably follow him to assure confirmation.

The CIO Political Action Committee will cut its staff to the bone. The PAC is expected by some to cut its budget for the important between-election year of 1947 to around $60,000, in comparison with an approximate $2 million budget for the crucial Southern organizing drive during the same period.

In the event that Senator Bilbo is barred from his seat as a result of current Senate investigations, his most likely successor will be the present speaker of the Mississippi State Legislature, Walter Sillers, known as a great friend of the Illinois Central and other railroads running through the state.

As a result of pressure from the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Grange, Republicans in the Eightieth Congress will push for consolidation of all farm-credit agencies under a bipartisan board, independent of the Department of Agriculture. The Farm Home Administration, formerly the Farm Security Administration, will be deëmphasized in this move.

Mounting irritation of farm groups and consumers with the present administration of the Department of Agriculture will force President Truman at least to transfer Secretary Clinton Anderson to another government post soon after the first of the year. Anderson's political ambitions remain intact, however, and there is some talk that he may land in Senator Carl Hatch's seat, when and if Hatch moves on to another job.

Welfare Convention

New Orleans

BEFORE an overflow crowd of progressives from all over the South, the Jefferson award for distinguished service to the South in the tradition of Thomas Jefferson was presented to Ellis Arnall in the AFL's Carpenters' Hall, ending last week's three-day biennial convention of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare.

Addresses by Senator Pepper and Arnall were switched from the municipal auditorium to the smaller hall at the last minute Thursday evening, after the New Orleans City Auditorium Commission ruled against permitting an unsegregated meeting. Asked by the press if he would address an unsegregated audience, Pepper replied, "When I am invited to a man's house for dinner, I never attempt to tell him where to seat his guests."

Among the resolutions passed by the convention were requests for the publication of the Rogge report and the continuation of the sedition trials; the unseating of Bilbo; support of Wilson Wyatt's emergency powers; "affirming the responsibilities of world citizenship"; condemning discriminatory freight rates; advocating equal advantages to agricultural and urban workers.

Rabble Resented

Washington

AS A GOSSIP COLUMNIST for the Washington *Daily News*, Evelyn Peyton Gordon is a tireless chronicler of social change. Her sharp insights into the elite of our times have brought cheers from fascinated readers. One of her most deserving efforts appeared in last Saturday's *News* on the Tito regime.

"I could not but notice," she wrote, "that it was definitely not the same people who attended the reception at the Yugoslav Embassy yesterday who attended the brilliant party given a few years ago for former King Peter in that same house on R Street. . . . Even such a powerful leader as Marshal Tito cannot boast followers of the social caliber as those who traditionally surround a monarch. . . . I didn't know many of the people who were there. They might have been the right people for the Yugoslav way of life. But they weren't the people who make up Washington society. . . . I liked Peter's party better."

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Does Not Choose?

Washington

THE Eisenhower-for-President drive had reached the lapel-button stage. Last week a red, white and blue pin, urging "Draft 'Ike' 1948" turned up mysteriously on a desk in the press room at the State Department. Both Democrats and Republicans disclaimed any knowledge of its origin, but reports still went the rounds that Eisenhower would doff his uniform and replace James F. Byrnes as Secretary of State early next year.

General Ike himself said nothing, as usual. But from his friends word came that he deeply resented the speculation about him, that he hoped to retire from public life when his duties as Army Chief of Staff were over.

Uruguay's Election

New York

THE PRESS REPORTS from Montevideo were cheerful. President-elect Tomas Berreta, a liberal who lifted Franklin Roosevelt's old phrase and promised an administration "a little left of center," had won over Luis Alberto de Herrera, the ultra-nationalist friend of President Peron of Argentina. On the face of it, the situation looked good. But closer scrutiny brought out these details:

Herrera's Nationalists gained two or three additional seats in the Senate and probably nine in the House of Deputies. Some factions of the winning Colorado Party are more strongly opposed to Berreta's group than they are to Herrera. Inside tips indicated that a hard-pressed Berreta might try to make some "working arrangement" with Herrera. Since Herrera opposed Uruguay's break with Germany, her war declaration against the Axis and the inter-American Act of Chapultepec, the proposed coalition promised nothing too healthy.

Prices Up, Porter Out

Washington

LAST WEEK, when Price Administrator Paul Porter resigned, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that wholesale prices had reached the highest level since 1920. They had risen 21.8 percent above last June, when price controls withered.

Then the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported that farm prices were 3.7 percent lower on November 15 than on October 15. But still they were 29 percent higher than when the war ended.

Porter's resignation was the last straw for the OPA. Plans are now being made to consolidate it with other war agencies headed for liquidation. In his resignation, Porter said this liquidation was well under way.

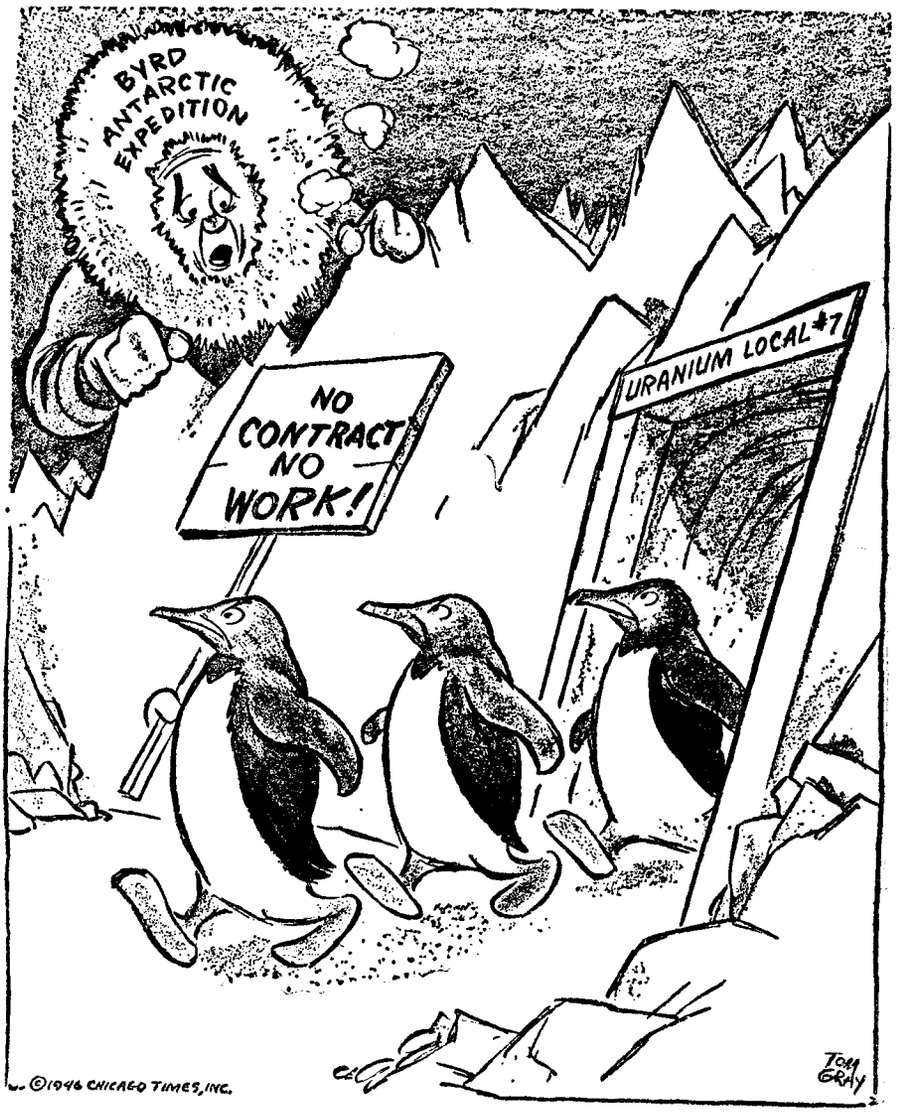
Freedom Ferment

New York

INDEPENDENCE FEVER was running high again in Puerto Rico last week. US and Puerto Rican officials were getting worried about the effectiveness of the recently organized Independence Party, pledged to seek the island's political separation from this country.

Typical jitters emanated from Luis Munoz Marin, president of the Puerto Rican Senate and leader of the majority Popular Democratic Party. In an article for *El Munde,* a leading San Juan newspaper, Munoz, once an advocate of early independence himself, pleaded that pressure for independence now might embarrass the United States in its foreign relations. To the Independence Party's threat to appeal to the United Nations if other methods failed, Munoz replied that the matter was one to be settled between the United States and Puerto Rico alone. His own solution to the problem is a plebiscite under which Puerto Ricans would decide whether they want the island to be (1) an independent country; (2) a US state; or (3) a US "dominion."

The stumbling block to this was the United States Congress. It would have to approve the plebiscite. And to date, Congress has not shown the slightest enthusiasm for any plan under which Puerto Rico might vote to ask for US statehood.



"IF JOHN L. SAYS SO—"

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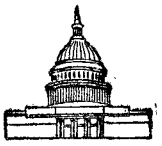
Washington Wire—Millionaires, Rejoice!



We squatted on the hard marble floor outside Justice Goldsborough's District Court of Columbia the other day at a quarter of eight. There were half a dozen other reporters ahead of us, determined to get precious front seats for the John L. Lewis contempt case. By a quarter of ten the queue extended down the corridor. The court itself is a modern, sanitary affair with subdued, indirect lighting well calculated to strain the eyes of any lawyer or reporter taking notes.

Judge Goldsborough is a tall, calm, baldish, middle-aged man, who voted for the Norris-LaGuardia Act when in Congress. He is casual, composed and impersonal, with occasional gleams of humor. When Assistant Attorney General Sonnett continued to argue a point which Goldsborough had already decided in his favor, the Judge advised him to stop lest he should change his mind. Once defense attorney Padway said that if Lewis is guilty of contempt, then all his lawyers are equally responsible, since Lewis had followed their advice. Whereupon Goldsborough dryly recalled the comment of Justice Hitz when oilman Harry Sinclair made a similar observation: "Yes . . . the cemeteries are full of people who took their doctors' advice."

If peace in the coal fields depends solely on court proceedings the nation is in a bad way indeed, for chances are that the current issues will be carried to the Supreme Court. The prospect is, however, that ultimately Lewis and the operators will start bargaining, and reach some sort of an accommodation without the government. Then Congress will come along in January and take it out on all the unions except the miners. Meanwhile the ventilating system of the very court where The Eyebrows is being tried has been shut off to save electricity. And this correspondent noted last week two common stable lanterns placed behind the plate-glass window of an otherwise darkened Connecticut Avenue luxury shop. They cast a murky glow on sables and mink coats hung up for Christmas display, and somehow or other seemed symbolic of the screwy postwar world.

Every now and then even this cynical old correspondent's well exercised power of credulity is stretched another notch or two by some improbable event in Washington. We have to confess candidly that we never thought the greed-grab boys would be able to knock over the OPA in the slick way they did—the consumer's interest in retaining controls seeming to us so self-evident. But they got away with it, and we learned something new about pressure groups.

But now comes an even more extreme case. It is this proposed 20-percent "across-the-board" tax cut, advocated by the Knutson-Taber Republicans. The proposal is to cut individual income taxes by the *flat rate* of 20 percent, whether for the little fellow or the millionaire. Of course the income tax is graduated, so the proposal really amounts to a millionaire-relief bill. The *United States News*, edited by David Lawrence, who, goodness knows, is no flaming radical, has just been estimating what this means. For a married man with two dependents and a $5,000 income, who paid $48 in income taxes in 1939, the proposed 20-percent cut would still require him to pay about 10 times as much, or $471. But after the proposed 20-percent cut, the family with a one-million-dollar yearly income would actually pay less than before the war—$671,080 as contrasted to $678,436 in 1939.

Can Knutson, Taber, *et al.*, get away with it? Well, it will be fun to see. The Chamber of Commerce of the United States, meanwhile, has flung itself into the situation with whoops of joy. They demand not a 20-percent, but a 25-percent, flat income-tax cut, and that isn't all. They would put a limit of 50 percent on the amount of tax which the government could take from any individual income. Millionaires, rejoice! And they would cut corporation taxes, too, which is something even Republican congressmen haven't suggested yet.

In a way this audacious proposal of the Chamber illustrates better than anything else the mood of the times. The Chamber, by contrast with the NAM anyway, used to be a pretty middle-of-the-road outfit. There are a lot of small-town businessmen in it who never had much sympathy for million-a-year incomes. But now the men who run the show obviously feel that all restraints are off. Only people who think the sky's the limit could make such tax recommendations. You can fairly hear them slapping one another's backs and guffawing at their other (self-contradictory) proposals—to make big debt payments, hold the budget to $25 billion and provide "adequate defense."

Notes.—Jealousy is reported among prospective GOP committee chairmen over who will be the first to investigate Elliott Roosevelt. . . . GOP Senator Wherry is in Europe now on a one-man probe; his particular target is UNRRA, which has had the nerve to feed hungry children in Soviet-dominated zones. . . . GOP Senator Wiley, on the other hand, who has been yelling for instant end of presidential war powers, suddenly discovered such powers are helpful in dealing with Eyebrow Lewis. As head of a special party committee on the matter, Wherry now says it should have careful study: another election issue out the window. . . . The fall in grain prices means cheaper food for Europe, if the coal strike permits it to get there. . . . The American Legion leads the attack on poor Wilson Wyatt's efforts to do something for veterans' housing; we can remember the time when the Legion itself used to represent the veterans' interests. . . . Wyatt's fight symbolizes about the last attempt to make large-scale use of government resources to meet a social need; his prospective defeat marks the abandonment of the program even by the man who appointed him, Harry Truman.

Washington T. R. B.

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Disarmament: Hope Is in Sight

by Jane Bedell

THE UNITED NATIONS has come to its most hopeful and most dangerous moment; hopeful because an alarmed and coöperative Soviet delegation has offered a basis for progress on Trieste, the Danube, reparations and disarmament; dangerous because the British and American delegations are gambling on their present strength to hold the UN to their fixed position on the veto. Science is on the American side. The Soviet position is closer to the UN Charter.

The change in the Soviet position is profound. Behind it is probably the influence of the Soviet scientist Dmitri V. Skobeltsin. As a delegate to the Atomic Energy Commission, Skobeltsin gathered the full implications of atomic warfare. Recently he took his findings to Moscow. American scientists believe that at last the Soviet government is awakening to the true situation. For this reason Molotov brought the atom bomb into the disarmament picture and firmly advocated a system of international inspection to control it.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

Since the entire discussion pertained especially to the Big Three, which of the smaller nations were supporting which of the Big Three and why? Was Molotov only trying to explode some political dynamite when he asked for figures on troops in nations other than ex-enemies? If so, why was he so willing to broaden it to include the ex-enemies? Why did he insist that troops abroad and troops at home were two distinct problems and should be handled separately?

On the other hand, why was the US so anxious that figures on home troops be included, even though the Russians had promised to give those figures later in connection with disarmament proposals? Why did Britain insist that figures on troops must be considered within the framework of a general disarmament program? Why did the US consider international inspection an integral part of a disarmament program, but refuse to support such inspection on the troop census even after Britain had lumped troops and disarmament together? Why would neither Britain nor the US allow information on armaments to be included along with information on troops and bases? Where did the atom bomb fit in? Why did the US and Britain seek to block an Egyptian amendment which would have recommended the withdrawal of troops stationed in other member nations? As the resolution was passed, what was the meaning of "military-type formations"?

The week's political maneuvers had as their focal point the bomb: how to get it or how to keep it, and eventually how to control it. They involved, in addition, the desire of the Big Three to maintain their defenses at home and to build their influence abroad.

The Soviet Union was in an enviable position compared to the US and Britain. Throughout the debate Molotov had made enough concessions to increase his side's voting power considerably. By the time the disarmament resolution came to a vote, on November 27, he had 18 instead of the usual six votes in his pocket. It is obvious that this vote does not constitute a hard-and-fast Eastern bloc. In many cases, of course, the vote was not increased solely because of the principles involved. The French position was partly the result of the Communist plurality in the recent elections, a sincere belief that Molotov's position was "absolutely irrefutable," as Parodi said. The Scandinavian countries generally supported Molotov, partly because they are now actively engaged in securing good economic relations with the Soviet Union, and also because, as small nations, they want a strong disarmament program. The other countries which joined Molotov are, significantly, Eastern nations. India voted with the Russians. So did Syria, which, as one of the new Security Council members, may be expected to play an important role both in Middle Eastern and in UN affairs. Other nations of the Middle East either voted with Russia or abstained—a sign that they are fed up with British policy and British troops in the Middle East.

This group was not solid, nor was it at any time strong enough to defeat the supporters of the US and the UK.

THE DISARMAMENT RESOLUTION

The resolution as it was passed upheld the British point of view. It called for information on the numbers of troops stationed at home and abroad, on the size and location of bases, and it included "military-type formations." This is to be handled as the first step in a study of the disarmament question. By broadening the discussion, Britain and the US gain time to decide what to do about their troops abroad and how to handle specific disarmament proposals within the United Nations. By including home troops in the resolution, the facts about Russian military forces at home will be required.

France and the Soviet Union had been firmly opposed to considering troops abroad as part of the same problem as troops at home. They felt that troops abroad had to do with preparations for the peace, with peace treaties, with demobilization and with other immediate postwar problems. Molotov was particu-

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larly concerned with US troops in China, US bases in Panama and Bermuda and British troops in Palestine and Greece.

But once the US and Britain had succeeded in lumping both aspects together under disarmament, Molotov bent his efforts to include the question of armaments, hoping that his amendment would worm out of the US and Britain information concerning the atom bomb and jet-propelled equipment.

The Shadow of the Bomb

Senator Connally's reaction to Molotov was that of a Texas rancher in the big city. He compared cattle to troops, said that America was loved all over the world and finally, perhaps in desperation, suggested that he didn't think anyone knew off-hand what was in the UN Charter. He consistently stuck his spur in his mouth and let Molotov ram it down his throat.

Under the circumstances, the Western position was chiefly upheld by Philip J. Noel-Baker and his assistant, Sir Hartley Shawcross. Time after time the British invoked rules of procedure to defeat Russian attempts to include information on armaments and a proposal to withdraw troops from member nations. Noel-Baker consistently and effectively used every delay tactic in the books. It was clear that, at all costs, the atom bomb must be kept out of the picture for the present. The US has insisted that international inspection be made a part of any atom-control program. But the US strongly opposed such international inspection to verify troop figures, and Russia voted with us, or, more accurately, against the British.

US opposition was based on the theory that, because of the short time and the lack of machinery, international checking of troop figures might prove a failure. In that case it would become more difficult to win Russian support for international inspection of the atom. Had the Russians succeeded in their attempt to include information on armaments as well as on troops and bases, they would have been in a position to demand the facts about the atom bomb. Because of Noel-Baker, armaments were not included, but the US is in the difficult position of advocating international inspection with its right hand and opposing it with its left.

But the following day Molotov proposed that the atom be discussed as a part of the disarmament program and that inspection of production and use of the bomb be established.

This, the most substantial and far-reaching Russian concession made to date in the UN organization, gave Soviet support to one of the main principles of the US atom-control plan. Molotov proposed international control operating to include "special organs of inspection," and he urged that two enforcement commissions be established, one on disarmament and one to prohibit

Drawn for the New Republic *by M. Bernstein*

Appropriate Honors

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the use of atomic energy for military purposes—but both under the Security Council with its veto powers. The Soviet proposal follows by one day a concession which solved the Trieste question and another which conceded the principle of freedom of the Danube. Moreover, it closely followed a long-rumored US plan to propose a disarmament commission which might operate either parallel to the existing Atomic Energy Commission or in combination with it.

Either the Soviet Union had, coincidentally, compromised on three important issues within 24 hours, or its entire policy was undergoing a change. No longer is Molotov's pattern of argument intransigent. It is cool, logical, persuasive and is winning many friends for the Soviet Union. The latest proposal has been received with enthusiasm on all sides. Unless the Western democracies can muster some strong moral basis for their arguments, they may lose their majority within the UN.

As the debate continued, the delegates began to realize that it had only begun. They had drawn up a resolution as a first step in a disarmament program. They had brought the question of the atom bomb into the open, where it belongs. Presumably they will have to go farther.

They will have to whip the Military Staff Committee into action to recommend plans for a UN police force before any real reduction in armaments can take place.

They will have to decide whether they want a partial army, navy and air-force reduction, and if so, on what basis.

They will have to decide, almost immediately, what they mean by "military-type formations." Does this include, as many have suggested, the Russian secret police? If so, does it also include the FBI?

They will have to decide whether they mean to give up military academies, standing armies, naval academies and air forces.

Most important of all, they will have to reach a final agreement on control of the atom, for the atom has now come up under entirely new circumstances. It has always been the heart of the trouble between East and West. Now Molotov has presented it in the most conciliatory manner possible. There is real reason to believe that the area of fear between East and West can be bridged, that disarmament can be accomplished and that the United Nations itself can mature into a powerful international organization to maintain the peace.

Navy Rule in the Pacific

by Eugene Rachlis

THE NAVY DEPARTMENT is the military ruler of some 48,000 people on islands scattered over five million square miles of the Pacific. President Truman's announcement of our intention to apply for permanent American administration of the islands won from the Japanese under United Nations trusteeship means that the Navy is likely to continue as military governor on the theory that it can defend the Pacific if it has across-the-board rule of the islands.

Navy government in the Pacific is of two types: naval civil government on the islands of Guam and Samoa, which dates from the Spanish-American War; and naval military government for the hundreds of tiny islands in the Marshall, Caroline and Marianas chains. Conditions on Guam, where the Navy has already ruled 50 years, are perhaps the best indication of the future for the other islands.

Recent criticism of the Navy administration on Guam, most notably the blast by Harold Ickes in *Collier's*, has caused the Navy to redress such specific grievances of the Guamanians as discrimination in the schools. But most Guamanians want a guarantee of civil liberties by act of Congress. There is still no trial by jury on Guam. Encouragement of self-government on the Pacific islands is official naval policy, but the Guam Congress is still only an advisory body whose recommendations may be overlooked by the naval governor of Guam; judges and division chiefs (or mayors) hold office at the discretion of the Navy.

The Navy has outlined for itself a five-point mission on the islands taken from the Japanese. It is:

1. To restore damaged property and facilities.
2. To improve health and sanitation.
3. To encourage and provide the early establishment of self-governing communities.
4. To institute a sound program of economic development and trade, industry and agriculture along lines which will ensure that the profits and benefits thereof accrue to the native inhabitants, and which will assist them in achieving the highest possible level of economic independence.
5. To establish an educational program adapted to native capabilities and local environments, and designed to assist in the early achievement of the foregoing objectives.

Eugene Rachlis was for five years in the Washington Bureau of the Chicago Sun. *He gathered the material for this article on a recently completed tour of the Pacific.*

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The reconstruction program appears to be progressing as well and as rapidly as possible under very adverse circumstances. The Navy is hampered by shortages of manpower caused by demobilization, but has enlisted local civilian labor to restore facilities. Shortages of building materials are also hindering rehabilitation, but surplus war property, including discarded barracks, is being converted.

Health and sanitation are among the outstanding contributions of the Navy to the Pacific peoples. Hospital and medical facilities are being provided in increased numbers. On the main islands, Navy doctors are always present, work in well equipped dispensaries and hospitals and go out from headquarters to pay monthly calls on the smaller islands. Medical care is free now, but if the island economy is stabilized, the Navy proposes to establish private medical care. Natives are being trained to handle minor cases and to help stamp out the most common Pacific ailments—yaws and intestinal parasites. The Navy has opened a nurses' training school at Guam, along with a medical practitioners' school.

The Failure: Democracy

The Navy's five-point program is falling down most conspicuously in failure to make progress toward self-government. The major impediment to self-rule stems from the Navy's view of its governing role. As one high-ranking officer expressed it recently: "We must maintain the natives as wards to protect them against economic and political interference." Native chiefs have been retained and still wield a certain amount of influence among their people, but no one denies that the Navy is boss.

In achieving "the highest possible level of economic independence," the Navy admits flatly it needs non-military assistance and has called in the United States Commercial Company, an RFC subsidiary. Under the guidance of some 60 civilian employees of the USCC, the productivity and standard of living have improved in the last year. Natives say, however, that the economy has not yet been returned to the efficiency achieved under the well integrated Japanese trading system. The Navy is the largest single employer on the islands. On Kwajalein the pay scale runs from $15 to $90 a month, but of the 800 native workers employed, only three get $90. Commodore Ben Wyatt, island commander, admits that the pay scale does not compare favorably with that of the previous rulers, the Japanese, but he blames this on price rises in the US. Income from sales of native handicraft to naval personnel and exports of copra through the USCC are the other major sources of island revenue. Rigid controls have prevented inflation, although higher rice prices have affected the natives' standard of living.

Within its limited facilities the Navy is providing some degree of formal education both for children and adults. A shortage of teachers is gradually being remedied; young men and women are being taught at Guam and then returned to their home islands to teach. English-native-language dictionaries and textbooks in native tongues are becoming available.

The character of American government of the Pacific Islands in practice is primarily the product of the attitude and abilities of the Navy military-government personnel. At the moment there are 119 officers and 225 enlisted men in Naval Military Government. That complement will gradually be reduced to 72 officers and 149 men. The two major criticisms by these men of the system under which they work are the subservience of the military governors to base commanders and the short term of military-government duty.

The Military Governor is outranked on each island by the commanding officer, who has no military-government training and who frequently knows little or nothing about the local population and its culture. Advancement of the island officers depends entirely on how well they operate the military base. Among the younger officers there is a general feeling that not until the islands' commanding officers are trained military-government personnel will the Navy be able to make substantial progress toward its avowed mission.

Military-government men say that the 18-month military-government duty is not enough to develop effective teams. They say it takes from six to eight months for a Stanford-trained officer to begin to understand the local situation, leaving them less than a year in which to put their knowledge to good use. The natives are bewildered by the repeated changes in administrative personnel, something they have experienced quite often in the past six months as Navy reservists have given way to Navy regulars. Navy military-government officials frankly admit the 18-month tour of duty is unfair to the natives, but to keep a Navy regular away from sea duty for a longer period would be unfair to him.

A Permanent MG Corps

One suggestion which has been looked upon with some favor by high Navy officials is the establishment of a permanent staff corps of military-government officers. A man in military government would not have to worry about sea duty. His one job would be island government. The alternative—opposed by the Navy—is civilian government for the islands. But this plan is not even being considered at the moment, and if it were, would meet strong opposition.

Naval rule results, at best, in a humanitarian paternalism toward the members of communities which happen to be near military bases. The principal goal of military government of the Pacific islands is not democratic political development and economic advancement for the Pacific peoples. It is a military rule for one purpose: military defense.

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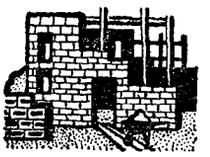
One Builder's Angle

by a Special Correspondent



MEET MY Uncle Ned—a building contractor. He is a hearty, self-assured fellow who is now busy slapping together houses for veterans under the GI bill. He gets them up fast, but not without cutting a lot of corners in the building code. Just the other day the veterans who moved into the houses he built in Cloverdale raised a row when they found that Uncle Ned had gotten away with using hollow, built-up beams instead of solid ones and laying on only one-eighth of an inch of plaster instead of the one-half inch he should have given them. Uncle Ned doesn't like to do that sort of thing, but he finds himself doing it anyhow.

I didn't mention these sore spots to Uncle Ned, but wanted to get his angle—and that of many other contractors in the building industry—about government controls on housing. Uncle Ned may not be strictly honest, but at least he is frank.

"What's the matter with government controls?" I asked him. "Why are builders so opposed to them?"

He stuck his feet up on the desk. "Two reasons. First, you've got to realize that what we builders fear most is a building boom that will end the housing shortage. When the government comes out with a program to end the housing emergency, we see high prices evaporating. The real-estate operators see their chances of selling and reselling the same houses, each time at a larger commission, go out the window.

"Second—and this may be even more important—the veterans' housing program is upsetting one of the cornerstones of private enterprise. Until now, price has decided what kind and how much housing this country had. If you had the money you got a house. If you didn't—or if you had very little—you took what you could get. Now, along comes Wyatt and puts through a program that makes the decision according to what most veterans need, with profit secondary. The government is directing materials to houses in a certain price bracket—$10,000 and less—even though there is a demand for higher-priced housing. That cuts into the most profitable part of our operation."

"Well," I asked him, "why are you fighting the Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill so hard? From what I've read about it, you builders ought to love it. It does practically everything but build the house for you."

"We'll buy it if Congress will get rid of the public-housing feature in it. There again you have the government building at ceiling prices instead of at prices that people who want housing immediately are willing to pay. Do you think we want people to compare apartments in public-housing property that rent for $20 to $30 a month with the stuff we build that rents for a lot more? If we go on building as we always have, for the guy who makes more than $4,000 a year, the families in between those that get public housing and the families which can afford the ones private industry builds will want to know why the government can't build for them."

"You builders did an effective job of helping to get the bill stalled in the last session of Congress," I said. "You must have a powerful lobbying organization."

"Most contractors are little guys like me, a carpenter when times are tough, a contractor when times get good. Did you know that before the war the average contractor built fewer than three houses a year, and that about two-thirds of all builders put up only one a year? One thing you got to say for us, though, we certainly make a lot of noise."

"What about the arguments I hear that the high cost of housing is due to restrictive labor practices?" I asked.

"Which ones?"

"Well, for instance, the 50-percent drop in labor productivity I hear builders complaining about."

"They've picked that figure right out of the air. Personally I think that labor productivity has dropped somewhat, but that's due more to the greater number of apprentices we're using and the rather high average age of our skilled men."

"What about the practice of stretching out a job to make it last longer?"

"That's principally a matter of materials and labor shortages. Often I hire some bricklayers for a job. When they show up there's only enough brick to last four hours. When they've finished, I tell them to come back the next day. They say nothing doing, they can get full-time work at the big downtown project. So I tell them to come back anyway. If I have only enough brick for a couple of hours, they can take their time and I'll pay them for a full day. I can't afford to lose them."

"What about labor refusing to use machinery?"

"I can see you haven't been at a building site lately. Otherwise you'd have seen the power saws, concrete mixers and other equipment we're using. I don't mean to whitewash labor—there's plenty that could be cleaned up. But I do see from your questions that we builders have done a good public-relations job."

"If it's just propaganda," I asked, "why do you go on peddling it?"

Uncle Ned looked out the window at the men working in his yard. "Well," he said, "someone's got to take the rap for the housing shortage."

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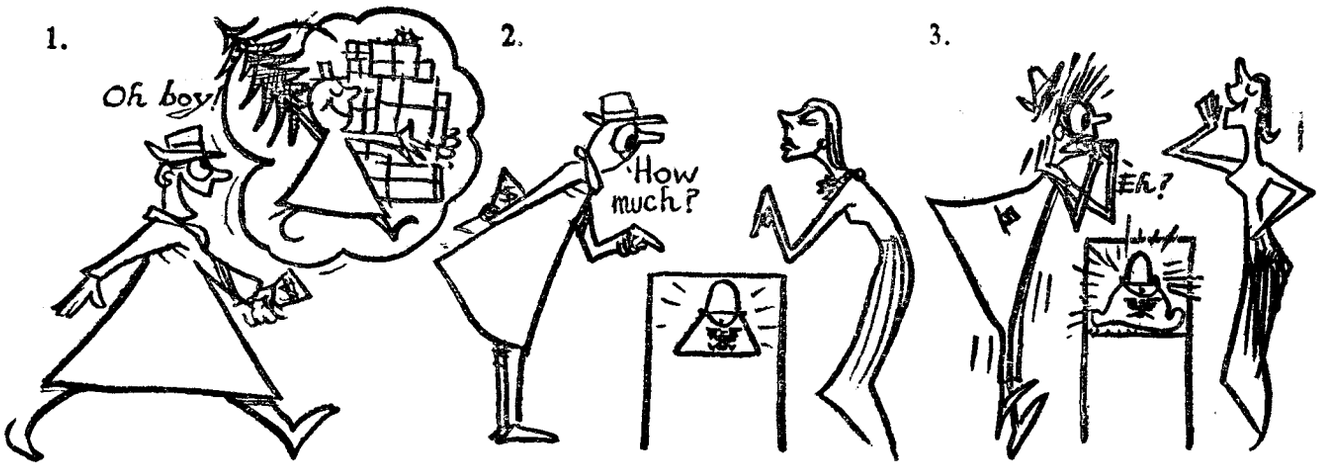

Nice Timing, Santa!

by Thomas Whiteside

At one department store in New York, a levy of 25 cents is placed on small children for the privilege of consulting the organization's Santa Claus this Christmas. Heretofore, these interviews have been free. The synthetic chimes and high-toned organ music piped over loudspeakers are still understood to be without charge to the customer.

At Saks Fifth Avenue, a kindly parent may buy a child's desk and chair, stylized in something resembling the shape of an elephant, for $95. Or, further downtown, in Macy's toy department, he can purchase a dandy boy's bicycle for $70. Macy's also sells a Lionel freight train with a whistle which puffs "real smoke" for $85. Should the tot scorn a mere freight train, he may have an American Flyer set, a more streamlined job, also with a whistle that belches smoke, for $139. Due to the shortage of the latter model, Macy's will not sell individual trains but only complete sets of two trains, two sets of tracks and other auxiliary machinery.

When all the smoke clears away, one can inspect at Lord and Taylor's an imported English airplane bag (suitcase to you) and buy it for $127. Or at Mark Cross, a desk-and-hand-blotter and calendar for $37.50. Or at Bergdorf Goodman, ladies' panties for $19. A number of wild Canadian mink who died for Jaeckel's are available there in coat form for $5,940, plus tax.

In Los Angeles, Bullock's offers an emerald-cut solitaire ring with two baguettes for $3,744. In Chicago, Marshall Field's invites purchase of Mabs girdles "with winsome, hand-painted cherubs" for $10, and observes "What an adorable idea for a gay, young junior's Christmas."

Whether or not the gayety described by Marshall Field's is shared by ordinary citizens who will have to disburse small mountains of cash in the coming season, the department stores and retailers are having a very merry time unloading, besides these luxuries, all the second-rate, off-brand and unpopular goods they bought in the first postwar spree.

To get some perspective on those hand-painted girdles, it is necessary to regress to a more prosaic level, say, the Federal Reserve Board's index of department-store sales. Based on an average day's sales of $10,886,000 for the 1935-39 period, the index rose from 127 in the week of November 4 to 251 in the week ending December 23 in the 1939 Christmas season. This year the index *started moving* from 277 at the beginning of November. By November 15 it was up to 341, and still climbing. It might reach 500 before Christmas.

Translated into dollars, this means that close to $40 million worth of business rolls through the department stores each day. In 1939 they did about $4 billion of the national retail total of $42 billion in trade. Last year, they doubled that volume.

They did most of this business by stocking up on inventories. The department stores of the country are loaded right now with double the dollar value of stock they had in 1939. This does not mean that they have double the amount of goods; in clothing and home furnishings, for example, the consumer price index has risen 67 percent since 1939.

But a great deal of the material the department stores have on hand is of inferior quality, outmoded style and design, or just overpriced. The stores are anxiously wondering how long this consumer spending bender will continue. Many think that the coal strike will mark the end of the buying trend.

Just to be on the safe side, the big stores are setting February 1, when their fiscal years usually end, as a deadline for unloading their inventories to as low a

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point as possible. By that time, they hope to have an idea of how consumer demand will react. Wherever consumer resistance shows up, they'll splurge on advertising. (October was a record month for department-store ads in newspapers: 36 million lines at a cost of something like $10.8 million, the greatest in the country's history.) If advertising doesn't do the trick, the department stores will cut prices. This has happened already in markets ranging from fountain pens to furs. (Mink, in case you care, cracked wide open and prices fell from 30 to 40 percent.) A manufacturer who made $18 woolen sports shirts is stuck with 10,000 of them on his shelves. All he can get at wholesale is $3.50 apiece. But in general, demand is still pretty high and follows wherever shortages occur.

If you shop around enough, you may be able to get your dollar's worth—your 1946 dollar's worth.

Watch your step when you buy a radio. Unknown brands, war-born inferior sets and prematurely marketed inferior sets made by nationally known manufacturers are being dumped on the market at deceptively moderate prices. Your best bet is to wait until next year, when improvements in FM and television will be on the way.

When you buy luggage, remember that the inflation in meat prices has hit leather, too.

Sweaters are a good buy. The warm weather in October made dealers cut their prices.

Toys are either completely shoddy or very expensive.

Lingerie is still expensive. Rayon and cotton are going up in price. There is no prospect of a break by the end of the year.

All household appliances are hard to get, expensive and will stay that way unless there is very stiff consumer resistance, which is most unlikely.

The news isn't so hot even for cats. The catnip situation is all shot to pieces, and no catnip mice are available even at inflationary prices.

But you can still see Santa for a quarter.

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Anglo-Russian Trade Talks

by Jack Winocour

London

H. A. MARQUAND is a Social Democrat economist, and V. A. Klentsov is a Marxist economist. If they were arguing politics, the surrounding air would be as blue and sulphurous as the smoke over most of Bevin's and Molotov's ideological battles. Fortunately, Marquand and Klentsov must operate below the stratospheric level. One has his feet in blitzed London. The other has his toes well dug into the ruins of Stalingrad. At that level one can talk business.

Marquand, who is Stafford Cripps's lieutenant in charge of the Department of Overseas Trade, is talking about Anglo-Soviet commercial relations with Klentsov, head of the Soviet Trade Delegation in London. The first trickles of British-Russian two-way trade which could undermine the thickest iron curtain are beginning tentatively to flow.

Trade talks began to get under way in mid-September, when difficulties, which had arisen under the Anglo-Russian civilian-supplies agreement of 1941, were resolved after a nine-month deadlock. By the terms of the wartime agreement Britain undertook to supply Russia with $560 million of non-consumer goods other than military stores. The Soviet Union paid $400 million, but disagreed over the balance, claiming that prices were in excess of those current at the time of the agreement. A happy solution was reached for everyone concerned, except the British taxpayer. The Russians are to get a discount of 13 percent on undelivered orders under the 1941 agreement. British exporters will be paid in full, and the British Treasury will make up the difference.

The present talks evidence the need each country feels for closer economic ties with the other. Before 1939 Anglo-Soviet trade did not reach impressive value or volume. In 1937 Britain imported $136 million of Soviet goods (one-third of the value in timber), and exported $78 million (mostly machinery and copper ingots). The crisis year 1938 reduced the comparative figures to $78 million (exports) and $70 million (imports). Compared even with the difficult trading conditions of 1938, the value of imports and exports for the first nine months of 1946 is extremely low, even though postwar prices are more than double 1939's.

The great retarding factor in the revival of Anglo-Soviet trade is the economic weakness of both countries, brought about by the sacrifice of war. Britain could easily absorb a great quantity of Russian timber for postwar housing. But Russia's exportable surplus is small, owing to her own reconstruction needs. The bulk of her exports is shipped from White Sea ports, where shortages of transport make it easier to ship timber abroad rather than carry it into the interior. As it is, Britain has contracted to take 25,000 standards of softwood (one standard equals 165 cubic feet) at a cash price of $136 per standard f.o.b. Baltic and White Sea ports. The deal is a useful one, but Britain has had to charter Scandinavian shipping to make good her own shortage.

Other Russian commodities which Britain needs are cotton and hides to supplement her own textile and leather import requirements. Britain did import about 3,000 tons of cotton from Black Sea ports between January and August of this year, and a British Board of Trade mission is at present purchasing cotton linters in Russia. Prices are below the New York market rate.

Delivery and Credit Problems

Britain has been sending a considerable number of mobile power stations and units, originally built for blitz emergencies in this country, to Odessa and other Soviet ports. British electrical equipment is in demand, and without government intervention the English Electric Company, Ltd., has recently negotiated with Soviet purchasers for contracts worth more than $4 million. British machine tools are also keenly sought.

But British exporters are having great difficulties in meeting orders in advance of a two-year delivery period. They are also anxious to obtain the prevailing market price on delivery. Present prices are well ahead of the prewar rate and are not yet stabilized.

In her new and uncomfortable debtor role, Britain is in no position to extend long-term credits to the USSR, but she is eager to trade. Contrary to popular belief abroad, her export trade is not state-controlled, but state-encouraged. As for her raw-materials controls, that for rubber (in which the Russians are highly interested) has recently been removed, and timber and cotton are the only commodities of Russian origin which British government boards import. There is nothing to prevent Klentsov and his associates from entering into direct negotiations with independent British traders without reference to the British Board of Trade. And the average British businessman, who was discounting Russian bills at 25 to 33 percent in the 1920's, no longer allows ideologies to interfere.

Current British trade negotiations with Russia are not intended to supplant the arrangements made under

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Jack Winocour, formerly director of the Washington office of the British Information Service and head of the American division of the Ministry of Information, is now on the editorial staff of Illustrated, *a London weekly.*

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the international trade agreements just concluded in London. The Russians were not present at these talks, and Britain, as the largest world exporter, prefers multilateralism. She has shown no concern over the Russo-Swedish and the Russo-Danish trade pacts.

Primarily intended as an exchange of economic information and availability *data*, the Russo-British talks are not directed toward limiting the scope of international trade, but, at least as far as the British are concerned, toward its expansion.

Peron's Paradise

Buenos Aires

DEAR MANUEL:

. . . The days of "abundance" are a thing of the past. We have had no potatoes for two months. For this, Peron blames the "oligarchy." But all government employees get them at their offices. It is obvious that the government itself is doing the hoarding, and raking in the profits. Lines almost literally a mile long are to be seen at all the markets: we usually wait hours for nothing at all.

The Frigorificos (meat-packing houses) have been closed for nearly two months, so that often there is no meat at all: this in Argentina, the land of beef! The packing companies themselves closed the houses over a dispute arising from the famous wage bonuses decreed by Peron last Christmas.

Peron's campaign reducing the prices of special items is a complete flop: the cheap cooking oil is so rancid that nobody can eat it; the cheap bread is a dusty black color and the cotton garments disintegrate in the washtub. It is obvious even to diehard Peronistas that his gang is getting rich on the proceeds of the "directed" economy.

The rich are getting even richer. Under this regime which is so fond of launching diatribes against "capitalist oligarchy," the Finance Minister, Miguel Miranda, owns 35 factories. Industry and commerce are ruled by Rolando Lagomarsino, a wealthy manufacturer. Exporters find it impossible to get permits unless they have political connections with Lagomarsino. The government wants to do all the exporting itself, buying from the producers at a low price and making huge profits, both on the operation itself and the commissions. Deputy Rodriguez Araya, 36-year-old politician from Rosario, denounced the Uruguayan wheat-sale scandal in which Senator Antille's secretary raked in a monumental commission. Araya's charge was so convincing that even the rubber-stamp Peronist deputies voted for an investigation. Thereupon Araya was suddenly murdered. Public opinion has been deeply stirred over this matter.

October 17, the first anniversary of Peron's return to power, was declared an official holiday in perpetuity and we had to endure two weeks of broadcasts by the "first lady" (Eva Duarte de Peron). During this period, teachers in all schools had to lecture their students on "loyalty" to the regime. The text of the lectures was incorporated in the teachers' dossiers. Each student was also presented with a folder, the cover of which pictured Peron with a couple of children on his knees, containing slogans about Peron which the children were expected to memorize.

All government employees and teachers not known to be Peronistas are being dismissed by the thousands and there isn't even any attempt to gloss over the reason. Those with the longest years of service are especially picked for dismissal so as to make them lose their pensions. None gets compensation for dismissal, which is often due to petty jealousies of Peron followers or as a result of the spy system.

PETTICOAT GOVERNMENT

I must speak more of Evita Peron, by whom the country is virtually ruled. For a time in August and September she retired from the limelight and it was rumored that the army had objected to her too prominent activity. A projected tour of the provinces, on which she was to distribute largess of food and clothing parcels, was canceled and she was officially reported ill. Now she is back again, presenting to the government radio organization her blacklist of radio stations. Their licenses will not be renewed. The jokes about her are legion, but are not translatable. There have been frequent hostile demonstrations when she appears in newsreels, but these have been so sternly repressed that, generally, movies of her and other members of the regime are greeted with icy silence.

The Alianza youth group is as active as ever. It is no longer composed of junior members of the big families, but of lower-class youths who get paid for their membership and constitute flying squads for attacks against Jewish stores and Socialist headquarters or newspapers.

Army, church and government are too firmly entrenched for any chance of a Bolivian-style coup, although there has been a certain nervousness in the Peron ranks ever since Villaroel was hanged from a lamppost. Outside the presidential mansion one morning the lampposts sported signs reading, "We are waiting."

The above account was written inside Argentina about November 1, and successfully smuggled past the Argentinian postal censorship. We print it anonymously in order to protect the author. — THE EDITORS

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Editorials

Spain: UN's Big Problem

SPAIN, that continuous barrier to world peace, comes up for discussion this week in the General Assembly. Behind the maneuvering on the Spanish question are two major powers, the United States and Great Britain. The US, according to informed sources, is playing the leading role in moral condemnation and economic support of Franco. So important is its position that it may well prevent the required two-thirds vote in support of a Polish resolution recommending a break in diplomatic relations.

The US is taking the position that it is a bad thing to intervene in the internal affairs of Spain. We have sent an adviser to the Latin American caucuses to make our stand known, and we have spoken through Latin American countries to emphasize it. The result is that many of the Central American countries which are so economically dependent on us are getting cold feet. They are no longer sure they can afford to vote against Franco if it means antagonizing us.

Their fears were increased when the US prevailed upon Dr. Guillermo Belt of Cuba to advocate a Latin American-sponsored plebiscite in Franco Spain, presumably on the theory that a knowledge of Spanish will take care of everything. The whole plebiscite idea is untenable at the present time. There are a thousand ways to intimidate a voting population without making that intimidation clear to the election supervisors. The only thing that could come out of such an election is either paper support of Franco or paper support of a weak monarchy. Neither is a solution to the Spanish problem.

Venezuela and Guatemala have taken the lead in attempting to counteract US pressure in South America. They are counting on the great moral issue at stake and hoping that even the US will not vote against the Spanish resolution but will, at worst, abstain. If there are enough abstentions, the resolution will pass, although much of its force will be lost. At present there are 20 sure votes for the Polish proposal in the General Assembly. To make it effective, more than 36 votes are needed.

If these votes can be won, Venezuela, Norway and Czechoslovakia may recommend that the Security Council take additional steps to implement the Polish resolution. These might include economic sanctions and further political isolation of Franco Spain.

The real danger is that the Spanish question will either be by-passed completely in the heat of the disarmament discussions or be sidestepped when it comes to the floor. By solving this problem, the United Nations could gain new prestige. Spain bears as much relation to disarmament and world peace as do troops and military installations.

Economic Myopia

THE SITUATION of 500 million hungry people overseas is at least as bad now as it was last year; but the United States, with all its food and money, continues to play politics with bread.

We have refused to support UNRRA Director LaGuardia's proposal for an international board to allocate supplies after UNRRA expires. It would require no new machinery to set up such a board with $400 million capital (half to be put up by us) which would then lend money to needy countries with which they would provide their own shipping and distribution facilities. Instead of supporting the plan or offering an alternative, the US proposes to hand out relief just as it pleases and to whom it pleases, setting its own terms and allowing no one else to interfere. LaGuardia has estimated that this nationalistic approach will cost the US 65 to 75 percent more than would its proposed $200-million contribution to an international board.

The US has enough grain on hand to be able to export 15 million tons during the fiscal year July, 1946, to July, 1947. We have promised to send 10 million tons, which requires a monthly shipment of a little less than a million tons. However, in the four and a half months since last July we have sent only 2.5 million tons. Already we have fallen short of our goal by 60 percent, and there is no sign of improvement.

Why, with our domestic surplus, is the food not being shipped? Reactionary farm-bloc leaders are advocating scarcity rather than abundance production and urging farmers to hoard in anticipation of higher prices. Some businessmen have convinced the American Association of Railroads and the Office of Defense Transportation that their products should take precedence over grain on American railroads. Finally, the relief slowdown is also traceable to our rail and shipping strikes.

The same men who advocate scarcity production, hoarding and priorities for non-essential commodities recently elected a Republican Congress. Their lobbies are busier than ever. Such pressures have led the State Department, the Department of Agriculture and the members of the US delegation to the United Nations to adopt the present position regarding food relief. They fail to realize that as malnutrition impairs European production, thus lowering the standard of living, we shall lose markets for our agricultural surplus as well as for our manufactured products.

Present US policy will not convince the peoples of Eastern Europe that democracy is desirable. A hungry, disillusioned population does not look for moral or political guidance to the country that has starved them.

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Letter from Tokyo—Co-Optimists Ride High

MORE POTENT than the pseudo-democratic fun and games on Japan's "Constitution Day," November 3, is the state of mind of her political and economic leaders, who are busily engaged in blueprinting plans for the great comeback. Japan's ruling class contains some cautious souls, but not many. The Co-Prosperity Sphere is no more, but Japan's Co-Optimists go marching on. They firmly believe that the signing of a peace treaty ending the stigma of "enemy nationals" and heralding the resumption of "free trade"—by which they mean Japan's right to buy and sell free of controls by the Allies—will be the signal for whole battalions of international customers to flock to Tokyo and Osaka and line up for the privilege of purchasing Japanese goods.

Should that comforting forecast be challenged, the Co-Optimists point, politely and patiently as though explaining the multiplication table to a backward child, to the fact that despite extensive war damage, Japan remains the sole highly industrialized nation in the Orient. The key to Japan's economic future, as they see it, consists of a compact mass of light industries which, by high productivity in a world short of goods, and "alliances" with American big business, will regain for this country the position and prestige in world trade lost by the war.

Specifically, they point to the existence of an acute worldwide shortage of textiles and consumer goods which Japan is, according to them, "in an ideal position to supply." In this connection, the textile industry is widely regarded as Japan's economic ace in the hole. This nation, declare the Co-Optimists, with its abundance of cheap labor, manufacturing skill and low costs, has only to work, and trade, prosperity and profits will follow automatically —always assuming, of course, that the unions behave.

PRODUCTION AND THE TRADE UNIONS

But Japan faces an acute shortage of basic raw materials—coal, iron, steel and cement. The list of destroyed factories and plants is long. Others have been heavily damaged. There is no immediate prospect of importing new machinery or even of repairing harbor facilities and rehabilitating land and sea transportation.

Japan has maintained a so-called favorable trade balance since the surrender only because normal trade doesn't exist—both exports and imports are rigidly controlled by SCAP—and because she has been exporting basic raw materials, which she must, on the contrary, import if her economy is to revive and expand.

As for textiles, because of the scrapping of spindles during the war, bomb damage and dispersal of trained workers, the industry has to date been able to process only half the American cotton imported this year.

Last December, following a MacArthur order to the Japanese government to remove all restrictions on political, civil and religious liberties, a Trade Union Act was passed, guaranteeing to industrial and agricultural workers the fundamental right to join unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively with employers. The bandwagon rush to unionize Japanese industry was on.

By May this country had 2,691,000 organized trade unionists, six times more than in 1936—the peak prewar year. Today Japan's trade-union movement embraces 13,000 unions with a total membership of around four million—ten times more than the highest prewar figure.

Of the present total, 1,574,000 workers belong to unions affiliated with the Japanese Congress of Industrial Unions, leader of which is Katsumi Kikunami, one of Japan's prominent journalists. Another million unionists are lined up in the National Federation of Trade Unions, presided over by Komakichi Matsuoka, veteran union organizer who is also chairman of the council of Diet members of the Japan Socialist Party.

NEW UNION TECHNIQUES

The revived Japanese union movement has been bitterly assailed by some and energetically defended by others. It has made mistakes these last months, and at times displayed the symptoms of adolescence in a period that calls for maturity. But one achievement cannot be denied—it has put trade unionism on the map. More space is devoted in the press to union activities than to any other aspect of Japanese events except the Occupation itself.

One reason for this splurge of publicity is that, confronted by bad economic conditions and growing unemployment, the Japanese unions have developed a series of novel strike tactics. Foremost of these has been "production control," a technique involving the temporary occupation of factories by the workers concerned and the subordination or lockout of top management officials.

Then there is the 24-hour "demonstration" strike; and the declaration of a "state of struggle." This latter is peculiarly Japanese in that its effect depends on that Oriental commodity called "face." If negotiations on union demands bog down, the union members remain at work, but declare the existence of a "state of struggle" in the industry concerned. This constitutes a public announcement that the employers are being unreasonable and helps to mobilize public opinion against them without arousing resentment by halting production in a nation short of everything.

Two major weaknesses of the Japanese unions during this first year have been a lack of interest in enforcing collective-bargaining agreements in some cases, and the low union revenues resulting from Japan's poverty. Most dues are so small that this income is often barely sufficient to defray the costs of printing and stationery.

Tokyo HESSELL TILTMAN

Postscript. – The new constitution which was adopted on November 3 is a largely American-written "100-per-cent-democratic" document—so much so that the Japanese, in private conversation, call it "The Translation."

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Weaknesses

The Fatal Weakness, by George Kelly. Royale Theatre, November 19, 1946.
No Exit, by Jean-Paul Sartre, adapted from the French by Paul Bowles. Biltmore Theatre, November 26, 1946.

WE MUST BE GRATEFUL for almost any play that serves to bring Ina Claire's playing to Broadway. And the dramatist in this case is also the director of the play; George Kelly's talents in directing the company go very well with Miss Claire's style.

"The Show-Off" seems to me about the best of our American comedies. But when George Kelly's talent got itself into a kind of Ibsen perspective, the effect became confused. That certainty of comedy emphasis that he commanded so surely seemed to grow vague in outline and emphasis; the serious element lacked security in style and taste, and the higher sentiments ran close to the banal. His last effort up to now was "The Deep Mrs. Sykes," which left people wondering why it was as good as it was without being really good at all when you came to think of it. This new play, "The Fatal Weakness," is not unlike that of Mrs. Sykes. Very likely, in fact, it is not really as good. But it deals out its blasts on the ladies with the same witty venom, or flashing scalpel, or whatever we choose to call it. We have a romantic wife, a philandering husband, a married daughter as hard as nails, the wife's sister, who joins her in trapping the male infidelities; and in the end there is a divorce and the husband marries his mistress and the wife and sister go to the wedding.

Long before then, however, the wind has gone out of the play, and not even such playing, and such team work, as that of Miss Claire and Margaret Douglass can keep it interesting. Perhaps George Kelly's kind of directing has something to do with the confusion or lack of general point. He is a remarkable man of the theatre when it comes to the details, the cues, the unbroken animation; but it is quite possible that for a whole scene, and doubly so for the whole play, his directing, for all its lively accuracy, its professional expertness, lacks emphasis. The mass emphases, as it were, that determine the play's pattern and meaning are not firmly achieved. In the midst of frittering motivations and surfaces from daily life and character, the play's whole scheme or content, in so far as it has any, is not established. The theatre world is too much with him, late and soon.

Jean-Paul Sartre's "Huis Clos," now produced at the Biltmore under the title of "No Exit" and in London as "Vicious Circle," is one of those plays that only the script or a performance can convey to any extent. But it is a phenomenon of the modern theatre—played all over the Continent already—and may as well be envisaged as such. It should be seen whether you like it or not. The scene is a room in Hell where three people are doomed to torture one another forever. One is a journalist shot for collaborating with the Germans, one a Lesbian who has enticed a young woman away from her husband, one the wife of an old man and paramour of a young lover whose child she killed. There is no way to convey here the turnings and twistings of the situation, the remarkable subtlety of the tortures these people provide for one another, the high invention that goes into the design of their combined reactions and impacts. I may say only that John Huston directs the play with great intelligence, copes with all its infinite gradations, avoids all monotony, proves himself a fine theatre asset. Annabella, as the Lesbian, despite a heavy accent, plays better than I have before seen her play, and Claude Dauphin, also despite an accent, plays the collaborationist very well. Ruth Ford, convincingly beautiful and in a gown that might well be a landmark in the costume season, plays most intelligently and to the hilt the role of the infanticide, forever herself, forever glamorous and tortured. Paul Bowles's version seems to be admirable.

The play is complete in itself, but we gain by knowing its connection with the philosophy of Existentialism, now so current in Europe. Too complex to convey here, it is concerned with the individual's attitude of moral responsibility toward his acts and his thoughts. These people of the play are not in Hell only for their sins, but primarily for the basic lack in their characters. STARK YOUNG

Never Sharp

THE RAZOR'S EDGE" deals in an artificial way with the depressing story of some vital young Chicagoans of the twenties who lead self-centered, destructive, loveless lives while their elders either stand by and watch or work against their happiness. The opening scene, a dinner party for blue-noses in 1919, with a small 45-piece band, introduces all the central figures when they are happy, uncomplicated and looking forward to the future. Larry Darrell (Tyrone Power), a snappy country-club type, deeply distressed by his war experience, is inclined to ruminate profoundly about things like "The dead look so dead when they're dead." He yearns to bum around until he finds out some of the why and wherefore of life. His sweetheart with the clear, metallic voice (Gene Tierney) wants a mink-coated life but is willing to wait a year for him so that he can have his loaf. The parental old guard includes Templeton, a supercilious fancy-pants (Clifton Webb)—a contrasting character to the hero—and Somerset Maugham (played in a disintegrating fashion by Herbert Marshall).

Larry forsakes their upper-crust life to search for a religious faith. He spends the first year in France, mixing with the hoi polloi in his particularly annoying way, looking smug, vacant, never saying anything and seeming rather a bore and a fake in his role as philosophic commoner. When Isabel turns down his offer of marriage, he takes it in his usual carefree, wooden way and goes off to India. There, miraculously, without disturbing Hollywood, he finds God among some artificial-looking mountains and religious folk. Now sufficiently wise and good to cure anything from migraine to dipsomania, and looking like the newest thing in religious leaders—neat, unmarked and well kept as a putting green—he buries himself in the masses to do good deeds and learn even more about life.

The movie, filled with bachelors, widows, loveless and tragically broken-up marriages, is also full of depressing people who are palmed off as good-hearted, generous, wise and constructive. You constantly feel Larry is a man to be pitied rather than a human being who has a corner on virtue. Though he is supposed to be completely gone on

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exotic, bony Isabel, he doesn't do a thing about it, and his bland forsaking of her to search for wisdom makes him seem extraordinarily self-centered. His search has more the quality of a sickly escape from all problems and human relationships than a pursuit of religious faith, but there is no sign that the director ever considered it that way. The movie actually seems like a vote for people such as Darrell, the snobbish, spinsterish Templeton and the stuffy author who stands aloof from life in a superior, tight-lipped way.

The boyishness, detachment and vacancy projected by Tyrone Power as Larry Darrell seem apt enough for this part. Despite these seemingly unintentional authentic notes and the fact that he moves in a brisk, stylish way, he never plays the role from the inside and he acts with all the earmarks of a drama-school student. Anne Baxter is very moving and strange as a memory-ridden, heartbroken, blousy whore, and Clifton Webb, in a deathbed scene that drips virtuosity, is responsible for one of the outstanding moments of the year. "The Razor's Edge" was directed by Edmund Goulding in a careful, stagey, $4-million style which somehow becomes more like pantomime than real life. The precise, slow, rhythmical movements are often very interesting.

MANNY FARBER

The Bandwagon

MORSE TELLS LABOR
NOT TO FEAR GOP
Ball Plans Bill for Drastic Changes
in Wagner Act
– *Head and subhead in the Washington* Post

He [Lawrence B. Gibbs, president of the Home Builders' Institute] urged the lifting of government restrictions on home-building by non-veterans. "If they were lifted," he said, "many people with savings who want better type homes could build and vacate rental property for veterans." – *From the Los Angeles* Daily News.

Scouts tell me that one of the most touching scenes at the resort [Hot Springs, Va.] is the sight of multi-millionairess Marjorie Davies, clad in ermine, gently and solicitously pushing multi-millionairess Grace Vanderbilt's wheelchair around the paths of the Homestead. – *From Evelyn Peyton Gordon's column in the Washington* Daily News.

"I do have one thing, one of the most expensive collections of jewelry in Hollywood," she [Paulette Goddard] added quickly. "I've been married three times, so you know I came by it honestly." – *From an interview by Phil Koury in the St. Louis* Globe-Democrat.

New England Papers Please Copy

We passed through Batavia of windmill fame. Historians say the windmill and barbed wire invented at De Kalb, which we also passed through, and the revolver, New England's sole contribution to the growth of America, made the conquest of the West possible. – *Colonel McCormick in the Chicago* Tribune.

On the Home Front

An open forum on "Palestine and the Jews" will be conducted at a meeting of the Charter Oak Community Club tomorrow under the leadership of Mrs. Donald Group and Mrs. Mary Schroeder. At the same meeting Edward More will discuss badminton. – *From the Pittsburgh* Press.

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of the New Republic. *Please enclose the original clipping.* – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Overcrowded Colleges

SIR: I have read with interest "The Crisis in Education" in your October 7 issue. We who have spent our lives in the teaching profession realize that difficult times are ahead for our whole system of American education. I am certain that the facts presented in your article will help the general public to understand just what the situation is.

I particularly like the first sentence of the article, especially, "it is well to remember that the growth of the American educational system is the story of the determined struggle of a free people to advance their standards through improved education."

For too long both educators and the general public have regarded our system of education as something separate and apart from our national economy. As our economy becomes more complex our educational system becomes an integral part of it.

Under the heading, "Are the Colleges Overcrowded?" you make the statement that "Many of the smaller colleges of good standing and practically all teachers' and junior colleges have not filled their acceptance lists." I think perhaps you will be interested in a report in the Des Moines *Register* of October 6, 1946. This report would indicate that every college in our state is being badly overcrowded. The prewar level of enrolment here at the Iowa State Teachers' College was 1,800 students; now we have 2,474. Next year we plan for 3,000 students. Both the State University of Iowa, at Iowa City, and Iowa State College, at Ames, are already overcrowded and will be more so next year. From all reports received to date, we are under the impression that similar conditions exist in neighboring states here in the Midwest.

MALCOLM PRICE, President,
Cedar Falls, Iowa Iowa State Teachers' College

Disarmament Now

SIR: You make a very important point in the October 14 issue, namely that Baruch's guarantee that "his proposed treaty will spell out in every detail the steps to be taken by each nation" in the process that is to end in "an all-powerful Atomic Development Authority" cannot allay Russian fears. But is not your own proposal that "the relative security positions of America and Russia" must be "equally modified at each stage" subject, if in slightly lesser degree, to the same criticism? If the relative security positions are each equally modified, the present disparity remains and is not this the reason for Russia's fear? Is Russia not determined—and why not—to remove this disparity?

I confess I do not see how that can be done except by general abolition of national military establishments, a proposal which Russia made in 1927 and again at a later date. I do not see why the United States should not now initiate a movement to bring this about. As a pacifist, I even believe that it would be sensible for the United States to divest itself unilaterally of its atomic and biological armaments if this is necessary to convince the Russian people of our good faith in proposing general disarmament. . . .

New York City A. J. MUSTE

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Books in Review

Hicksborough

ALWAYS, when they become disenchanted with social movements, the intellectuals scatter to the corners of the earth. In the 1820's they went to Italy; in the 1920's they went to Paris, Majorca, Bali or Mexico, with a few stragglers in the arctic regions. In our own decade, with travel more difficult than it was in stagecoach days, they are simply taking to the woods, in Maine or British Columbia; or they are living nearer New York and trying to achieve independence on five acres. Independence is the watchword: they want to cut their ties with society and achieve the illusion of leading their own lives. Granville Hicks has taken an opposite course, one in which I imagine that comparatively few will follow him, because, for all its apparent facility, it involves more day-to-day problems than arctic exploration or beachcombing in the South Seas. He has stayed at home and has plunged into the closely knit community life of an upstate New York town.

Before discussing his record of small-town life,[1] let us pause for a moment to describe the author. Granville Hicks in his middle forties is broad-shouldered, angular and beginning to be a little stooped, so that I suspect him of planning to grow chin whiskers and pass for Uncle Sam. He has a high, narrow forehead, windburned cheeks, blue eyes always blinking, as if he had just taken off his glasses, and a nose that makes one think of a little apple on a stick. He likes to square-dance and to play croquet, at which he can spot me three wickets and beat me to the stake. He laughs a great deal more than in the days when he was an editor of the *New Masses*. Having lost his belief that the world can be saved by an infallible prescription, he has discovered the humor that is based on a recognition of the absurd in oneself, rather than the wit that consists in exposing the absurdities of others. He has also become a better writer, in the sense that he has learned to make qualifications and that his style is now easier and more colloquial, though it is still a little dry.

It is very seldom, and then with an effect of amazing the author as well as the reader, that he expresses his emotions. "The physical setting of our lives was pure Roxborough—rather austere, rather exciting," he says in one place, when we are not expecting him to use those big adjectives. "Roxborough snows," he continues, "the colors of a bright winter day, spring mud, the stony soil, summer droughts, cool nights for sleeping and warm nights for growing corn, the depth of frost in the ground, the depth of water in the well, the flashing tails of frightened deer, the fox tracks on a snowy morning, the red of maple buds in April, the shad-blow storm—all this became the shape and substance of existence." Then, after these lines that come all the closer to being poetry for their unexpectedness, he returns to the dryness of prose. "But the part of the life that was not physical," he says, "that was intellectual and professional and social, had little to do with Roxborough." One complaint that I have against Hicks's writing in general is that it expresses too little of the physical or emotional, too much of the intellectual and professional and social. The emotions are there, and we often have the impression that they are sharp and strong; but something gets in the way of their being said.

At one point Hicks quotes from Eliot's "The Hollow Men," and we are surprised to find how well the quotation applies to himself: "Between the conception and the creation, between the emotion and the response, falls the Shadow." But this shadow that also falls "between the desire and the spasm, between the potency and the existence" is not the shadow of self-consciousness that I think Eliot had in mind; with Hicks it is the shadow of conscience, the New England scruple, the voice that keeps asking with a hint of Yankee twang, "Is it right, am I doing my duty?" It robs his work of its potential richness, keeps it angular and intellectual, sometimes forces it to the wrong conclusions; but at the same time this New England shadow gives it an integrity that makes all his books worth reading, this one more than most.

He is shrewd, too, in his Yankee fashion, and his report on Roxborough contains a good deal of material that has been missed by the professional sociologists. Let us summarize a few of his observations on life in a fairly representative New York State township with 836 inhabitants.

TO A NEWCOMER from the city, Roxborough seems a remarkably unified community, with few class distinctions among its people. Everybody knows which are the "better families," but these are not always the families with the highest incomes. "Although I still find it hard to believe," Hicks says, "I am pretty well convinced that class distinctions in Roxborough are largely subjective. That is, a person by and large belongs to the class he wants to belong to." The chief virtue of the town is neighborliness: "You may gossip about your neighbor, and you may even quarrel with him openly, if you and he are the quarreling kind, but you help him when he or any of the family fall sick, you tow his car if he can't get it started, look after his stock when he goes away, rush to his aid if his house gets on fire and put on your best clothes to go to his funeral." Since there is practically no other subject of interest except your neighbors, everyone has a chance to study human nature. "The speculative mind" Hicks says, "—and certainly there are speculative minds in Roxborough—has a vast amount of human data to consider and not too much else. Inevitably it takes its material and makes something of it. The tradition of rural shrewdness is not a myth."

The virtues of Roxborough are closely related to its faults. Intimacy leads to gossip, sometimes malicious, which in turn leads to quarrels, which sometimes develop into lasting feuds. Almost everyone lives in fear of public opinion. "That's what's wrong with this town," one of the

[1] Small Town, by Granville Hicks. New York: The Macmillan Company. 284 pages. $3.

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natives said; "everybody's scared of everybody else." In respect to private morals, however, the town shows a bewildered tolerance that seems curious to anyone who remembers American village life before the First World War. "People are increasingly tolerant," Hicks tells us, "not only of deviations from strict monogamy but also of falsehood, malicious scandal, political chicanery, lawbreaking and sharp practice." With the old code breaking down, some of the natives are left with no standard of judgment except consistency. "I wouldn't care how many men she slept with," one woman said of another, "if only she'd keep her mouth off other people"—that is, not accuse them of the same sin. A man said, "I can put up with drunkards, but I can't stomach them in church."

Except in questions of personal morality, people cling to the standards of the past, to habits of thought that were formed in the early 1800's, when Roxborough was a self-sufficient farming community. Today the town distrusts all suggestions for local improvements, and there are few citizens who dare to offer them; sometimes Hicks feels that the town's motto should be, "I'm not sticking my neck out." Every new project, even if clearly desirable, comes against a barrier of inertia. There is no way to remove the barrier except by talking—not writing—to every family. When Hicks was trying to establish a fire district and thought of sending out a mimeographed letter to the voters, a politician told him, "That's all printed matter, y'unnerstan' what I mean? All printed matter. That won't get you anything. You got to talk to 'em. Either you got to get 'em together and talk to 'em in a body, or you got to go to their houses and talk to 'em separately. But you got to talk to 'em." The fire district was finally talked into being; but Hicks stopped talking too soon, and the voters refused to authorize the purchase of a fire engine.

LOCAL POLITICS is fairly corrupt and extremely inefficient. It suffers from the one-party system now prevailing in almost all the smaller Northeastern towns, which vote Republican just as infallibly as Southern counties vote Democratic. In some ways the situation is even worse than in the South, where the Democratic primaries are an opportunity to choose among candidates. In the Northeast, minor officials are effectively chosen at the Republican caucuses, semi-private meetings where the bosses are able to impose their own candidates. They sometimes choose men whose only qualification for office is that they are willing to do what they are told. A few years ago the Republican boss had the two stupidest men in the township nominated as justices of the peace. "I've got it fixed up," he said after they had been elected. "If I take a piece of paper out of my pocket and lay it on the table, they're to vote yes. If I pick up a piece of paper from the table and put it in my pocket, they're to vote no. It took them quite a while to get it straight, but they're doing all right now."

Yet for all the faults of Roxborough—and he doesn't try to hide them—Hicks likes to live there. "I have learned," he says, "to like trading in a store where I am known by name and can meet friends and swap gossip. I like knowing the storekeeper not only as a man behind a counter but also as a human being. . . . I like the old-timers, too, though they don't always like me, and I know they are no fools. Their talk gives the town a past, and sometimes it makes the smart city folks seem shallow. I find it good, as I have said, that I am thrown in with many types of men and not merely with intellectuals." That last sentence states the secondary theme of his book, which is the isolation of intellectuals in the modern world and the question how to overcome it. For Hicks the simplest answer is working with his neighbors for very modest aims which they hold in common. In that way—and after many disappointments—he has gained a sense of participation in the community, something that gives warmth and body to his book. "I do not pretend that I like everyone in town," he says in another connection. "But there is no one in town—well, to be honest, almost no one—who is a blank, who exists for me merely as a function or a type. Good, bad or indifferent, they are there—forces, dynamos or, more accurately, entities, organisms or, to be quite clear, human beings."

MALCOLM COWLEY

The Next Stage in Poetry: II[1]

THE LAST TEN years have seen a splendid and varied poetry about political and public events. The Spanish civil war inspired Alberti to poems of a tragic grandeur; the fall of France turned Eluard, Jouve and Emmanuel to work of a noble pathos and apocalyptic splendor; the air raids of 1940 inspired Edith Sitwell to a fierce compassion for the woes of humanity. The earlier Modernists, of whom Ezra Pound was a characteristic example, were less concerned to pity mankind than to mock it. Even Eliot has never shown any great warmth for it and prefers the distaste which its vulgarity and failures awake in him. Pound and Eliot are still exponents of the old view that artists live in their own world and need not trouble themselves too much about common men. But poetry lives on life and cannot sever itself too far from it without greatly impoverishing itself. The completely detached artist cannot really exist, and the greater an artist's detachment the greater is the risk that the springs of his inspiration will dry up. The new poets have seen this danger and avoided it. The cry of agonized humanity has touched them in their hearts and made them respond with warmth and power. Poetry has come back to human life and found new strength in it.

There seems, then, to be a tendency in poetry to return to ease and simplicity without losing any of the hard-won gains in power and effectiveness which an age of experiments gave to it and to speak about contemporary events without weakening the individual note which is the hallmark of creative art. Such a tendency may lead in unforeseen directions, and of course it is much too early to say where it will end. But one question presents itself at the start. Is it possible for poetry to become simpler and to be more in touch with common events without losing the special fineness and quality which it now possesses? Is not this return to older manners and methods a retreat from the high standards which poets of this century have set themselves, and does it not inevitably mean some vulgarization and diminution of power?

[1] Maurice Bowra, Warden of Wadham College, Oxford, is the author of many books on classical and modern literature, the most recent of which, *From Vergil to Milton* and *The Heritage of Symbolism*, were published by the Macmillan Company. This is the second part of an article which appeared originally in *Horizon*, an English literary monthly. – THE EDITORS

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A glance round the European scene does not give an answer, but it suggests certain possibilities. The simplification which we have noticed is partly the result of a political doctrine that poetry must serve immediate social needs. We cannot dismiss this doctrine as absurd. Good, even great, poetry may treat of immediate needs, as many passages in Horace, Dante, Camoens and Milton show. Indeed, many fine poets have written well about such subjects, and their awareness of contemporary needs is one of their claims to respect from posterity. The large output of Russian poetry during the recent war shows that such a doctrine, officially sponsored and enforced by ingenious sanctions, may produce work of considerable interest. But there is none the less a danger in the specially modern application of the doctrine. The poet is expected and sometimes ordered to write about contemporary themes. Even without outside pressure he may none the less feel that it is his duty to do so. Now the workings of the creative faculty are so strange and so incalculable that it cannot respond with its full powers to every theme that government or public opinion or conscience demands of it. It can produce something, but that something will not often be of the best quality. Though young Russian poets, like Konstantin Simonov and Olga Bergoltz, have written good poems about the war, they have written others which are less good and which, though their ideas and temper meet an immediate demand, lack the appeal of authentic poetry. Even a great artist like Eluard seems to fall below his proper level when he writes not from an inner conviction but from a desire to say the right thing. The danger of this outlook is that it encourages work which lacks something essential to any true poetry, and it means that poets fail in their real task. The renewal of life which poetry brings comes only when the poet gives of his very best. To ask something else of him is to encourage poor work, and those who make this demand may even frustrate their own ends, since second-rate poetry is ineffective even as propaganda.

This is a special case, and its causes lie outside the natural development of poetry. But the tendency to bring poetry closer to the common man raises another no less important question. Few would deny that in its early years Modernist poetry was moving further and further away not merely from the ordinary man but from the educated reader. It was esoteric and private. This tendency has been curbed, and we may ask how far the reaction will go in the other direction. It is natural and right that a poet who is concerned with current events should wish to be understood and appreciated by a large number of men and women. For this he must make concessions to their understanding and say what they can appreciate, even if he must educate them to do so. The question is simply whether in so doing he must sacrifice too much of what is really essential to his art and turn his poetry into rhetoric or some other substitute. This certainly can happen. When Mayakovsky began his creative career he was a wonderfully gifted poet, and everything that he wrote, however strange and unprecedented, had the appeal of authentic poetry. But the Russian Revolution caught him. He felt its tremendous appeal and gave his services to it. Wishing to do his best for the new age, he changed his art. The result is far from negligible. Mayakovsky was a great rhetorician, a master

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of telling phrases and emphatic effects. But his later poetry has lost the magic of his first work. He knew what he was doing and made no secret of his choice:

> But I
> mastered myself
> and trod
> On the throat
> of my very own songs.

As a public figure Mayakovsky succeeded, but as a poet he suffered. Is it not possible that others, equally gifted, may make the same decision and the same sacrifice?

There is an alternative solution. It is possible to write poetry on popular subjects which has a wide appeal and is none the less poetry and nothing else. A conspicuous example is Lorca's *Romancero Gitano*, a flawless work of art in which modern technique and brilliance portray familiar subjects in the life of the common people of southern Spain. This poetry, which appeals so powerfully to the highly educated, appeals no less to the uneducated and illiterate. Arturo Barea tells how a member of the Republican militia, with no claims to culture, could recite Lorca's "Romance de la Guardia Civil," and said, "He makes you see and smell the Civil Guard." Nor was this case by any means unique. In the civil war the poetry not only of Lorca but of Alberti and Miguel Hernandez was recited to large popular audiences and quoted by all kinds of men. Of course the Spanish situation is in some respects peculiar. The poets can appeal to many common ideas and to a traditional outlook. Life is less specialized and differentiated than in most European countries, and the poet's images, drawn from a world known to everyone, come home with easy and immediate effect. But the lesson is too striking to be dismissed. It shows that the need of a popular appeal and the use of popular themes need not necessarily detract from a poem's power and purity, and that a modern manner, with its exactness and truthfulness, is a powerful instrument when a master uses it.

It is surely possible that what Lorca did in Spain other poets may do elsewhere. Eluard seems to be trying to do something of the kind in France, and if some of his experiments have cost too much, there is no final reason why he should not find a happy balance between his old and new styles and become both a popular and a great poet. Variegated though the social systems of France and England are, and much though they have lost in their traditional heritage, there still exists a large common experience on which poets can work and to which they can appeal. New movements in education should, if they do their duty properly, increase this common element. Broadcasting does something to make poetry known and to encourage a new kind of poetical drama, and it is more successful than many listeners like to admit. The great increase in reading which has come with the war may not be a temporary anodyne, and poetry has not been so widely read for many years. The need and the desire for poetry are clear enough, and the poets have responded to it with a change in their art and a new sense of responsibility. Is it too much to hope that the Philistinism, which has been steadily decreasing since the beginning of the century, may decrease even more and that poetry may find a new and extended activity with its new harmonies and its contact with living men?

MAURICE BOWRA

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Hate in the Postwar

The Plotters, by John Roy Carlson. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 408 pages. $3.50.

DURING the nightmarishly long nights in the jungle, many of us distilled out of our very misery a hope for a brighter tomorrow. The war, jungle, muck and mire, the bomb, shell and battle hemmed us in, squeezed us close together, made us blood-brothers. Why, tomorrow we'd be home again, purged of our prejudices, thrusting forward together toward the "brave new world"!

Home again brought disillusion. The headlines shattered the spell. "Hood River Legion Post Erases Names of Japanese-American Soldiers from Honor Roll," "Jews Mobbed and Beaten in Boston," "Negro Lynched in Dixie." That was before V-J Day. Since, the flames of hate have been fanned higher and farther. Comments John Roy Carlson, after the first year of "peace": "The conclusion is inescapable that while we have won a war of democracy over fascist evil abroad, we have allowed hate and prejudice to gain a firm foothold at home."

I agree with Carlson, though it is bitter to do so. True, during the war, a few hate-mongers were jailed for sedition. But since V-J Day the lid's been off for the lunatic fringe, the anti-Negroes, anti-Jews, anti-Catholics; for those who scorn democracy with the lower case *d*; for those who peddle pieces of hate.

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The end of the war offers the opportunity of winning a great prize, The Veteran, to be used as a tool. A booby prize. Carlson quotes Gerald L. K. Smith, prewar and postwar idol of the super-duper ultra-nationalists:

My time will come in the postwar period. The candidate will not be me; it will be a young veteran of this war, but I'll be behind him. If business conditions are bad—inflation, widespread unemployment, farm foreclosures—then my candidate will be elected. . . . Then the flame will spread, and the extreme nationalists will come to power. When chaos comes, I'll be the leader.

You think perhaps it can't happen here, now that we've beaten Hitler, Mussolini and Company? Then read the headlines, today's headlines: "GI's Back Ballots with Bullets in Athens, Tennessee," "Columbians Take Law in Own Hands in Atlanta," "Negro Veteran Blinded by Police in South Carolina."

As in *Under Cover*, Carlson cites first-hand information, gleaned through contact with them, to damn the hatriots of the extreme Right. His case against the Communists, who he believes are also out to capture The Veteran, is sincere but not so effectively documented.

Carlson takes a fast run through the veterans' organizations, and is generally nice, innocuous or mildly critical in sizing up the regular groups. But I think he missed an important point in this area of investigation. There's no questioning the grass-roots patriotism of these organizations, but the fact is that the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, with five million members, though fighting furiously against communism, have failed to take positive action against the forces of racial and religious bigotry which are an ever present threat to decent Americanism.

Westbrook Pegler (whose real name is Pegler) denounced *The Plotters* two days before official publication date. Consider that a word of praise. SAM STAVISKY

Our Own Backyard

Betrayal in the Philippines, by Hernando J. Abaya. With an Introduction by Harold L. Ickes. New York: A. A. Wyn. 272 pages. $3.

IT IS a weakness of American thinking about colonial issues that the Philippines draw far less comment in our press than do many of the possessions of other powers. Yet, on the basis of the material presented here by Hernando Abaya, a Filipino journalist, it would be well for us to pay more attention to our own colonial responsibilities. The Philippines, it is true, became formally independent last Fourth of July, and this date might seem superficially to have marked the end of their colonial status. But at the time the islands were set free, they contained a sizable American military force, the United States Army and other American government agencies held or owned important insular properties, and laws passed by the United States Congress had deprived the Philippines of full control over key aspects of their economic life. Moreover, largely through American acts of omission and commission, an ex-collaborator with the Japanese had been elected president of the islands.

Abaya notes certain favorable features of past American

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policy toward the Philippines as well as the relief extended since their liberation. But the main theme of his book is the story of a double betrayal: the desertion to the Japanese by certain top leaders of the prewar Philippines, and the later benevolence of General MacArthur and other American representatives toward Manuel Roxas and the rank and file of the Filipino collaborationists.

It is an ironic paradox that while José Laurel, puppet president under the Japanese, is to be tried on war-crimes charges, Roxas, who was one of his associates, is president of the free Philippines. Roxas' record shows that, although he resisted Japan in the period immediately after Pearl Harbor, he later joined in drafting and signing the puppet constitution, supported the puppet government's declaration of war against the United States, served under Laurel as chairman of the Economic Planning Board, became a Minister without Portfolio in Laurel's regime, and in the last weeks of Japanese rule called on Laurel almost daily and participated in cabinet meetings. Roxas claims, as Abaya points out, that his association with the puppets was a cover for assistance to the guerrillas, but the latter do not support this statement. MacArthur has also "cleared" Roxas, but without presenting evidence. It is obvious, as former Secretary Ickes declares in his vigorous introduction, that "a thick coat of whitewash" has been applied.

Abaya analyzes the agrarian reforms and other activities of the Hukbalahap, which carried on effective guerrilla resistance to the Japanese, as well as the program of the Democratic Alliance, the progressive, anti-Roxas coalition of which the "Huk" is a part. In doing this he has gone below the surface of events to describe the desperate need for change in agricultural and labor conditions in the islands. His discussion underlines the fact that the main problem in the Philippines is similar to that facing most of Asia—the replacement of an outmoded agrarian structure by a more balanced economy based on popular welfare.

Betrayal in the Philippines would have benefited from compression and rearrangement, for it is badly organized. But in a book of this sort, written by an earnest eye-witness, the story is more important than the trimmings. Abaya has written a forceful, angry account of Philippine conditions which deserves a wide reading and should have the effect of making many Americans sit up and take notice of our own activities in the colonial world.

LAWRENCE K. ROSINGER

A Reader's List

Planning No. 257. US Slump—UK Defense (Political and Economic Planning. Available through the New Republic, *25 cents).* PEP tries to visualize what would happen to world economics in the event of an American depression. Its forecast is not pleasant to behold: Multilateral trade, the backbone of peaceful international economics, would be replaced by a nightmare of tariff walls, quotas and blocked currencies; the Bretton Woods Monetary Fund would become an ineffective and harassed body; and the projected International Trade Organization, as well as other UN groups, would be stillborn. A depression here implies fewer imports, a deflation of the world supply of dollars and lower living standards for foreign countries whose national incomes depend on trade with the United States. Great Britain, the editors show, is especially concerned, for past declines in American imports have coincided with decreased British exports. United Kingdom policy, consequently, must seek to maintain foreign demand for its goods. It will have to encourage the use of sterling balances in British markets and the purchase of capital equipment from British manufacturers. It will mean, in short, strenuous measures to quarantine the disastrous effects of American fluctuations on world economy. The editors observe that unfilled demand might provide a cushion for several years, but that is cold comfort in a world where no one listens to the first roll of thunder.

Planning No. 258. Basic Problems in the Middle East (Political and Economic Planning. Available through the New Republic, *25 cents).* This broadsheet, a discussion of general economic and social problems in the Middle East, summarizes the findings of several recent investigations. It is a useful pamphlet, for Middle Eastern economics has long been dark-

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ened by the lack of reliable data. The agricultural question, which covers such matters as water supply, excess population and a land-tenure system whose origins go back for centuries, is revealed to be fundamental. In the absence of an adequate solution, there can be little advance out of the bitter poverty that characterizes the area. The editors suggest that expanded scientific work, including land and geologic surveys, social work and health projects, might provide a suitable start. This, together with development of water resources, improvement of fisheries and the encouragement of local industries, would offer a basis for larger projects in the Mesopotamian Valley. (There is a curious tendency to dismiss similar schemes for the Jordan River.) That no reservoir of technical skill exists in the Middle East is acknowledged, and the editors admonish the West to lend its aid without imperialist designs. But this does not reckon with the intransigent opposition of the few powerful landlords and sheiks.

Lost Treasures of Europe, edited by Henry La Farge, introduction by Ernest T. DeWald (Pantheon, $5). A pictorial record of the great cultural monuments that were either totally or partially destroyed in World War II. In a few cases the photograph of the ruins is shown beside the work of art before the destruction; but otherwise very wisely only the original is giv . Ten countries are represented. An excellent descriptive list of the 427 plates is provided, giving in each case the history, the artistic significance and the extent of the destruction that occurred. A well done book that may be something of a monument in itself. S. Y.

Crime and Punishment

What Happened at Hazelwood? by Michael Innes (Dodd, Mead, $2.50). Who killed the arrogant and lecherous Sir George Sismey? Was it his young wife, Nicolette, or his cousin Hippias, newly arrived from Australia, or might it have been Owdon, the enigmatic general factotum? Around a family album of eccentrics Innes has built his first straight mystery in some time and the result is a soundly plotted, always diverting tale—in short, a charmer.

Murder Miscellany.—The last two Inner Sanctum mysteries —*Purgatory Street*, by Roman McDougald, and *The Widow-Makers*, by Michael Blankfort (Simon and Schuster, $2 and $2.50)—deal, respectively, with the return from the war after a plastic-surgery operation of a possible imposter, and the machinations of a gang of international fascists. Both jobs have either enough suspense or lively action to recommend them. The Lockridges, in *Death of a Tall Man* (Lippincott, $2), provide Pam and Jerry North with a neat puzzle complete with Lieutenant Bill Wiegand, Sergeant Mullins, Martini the cat and much engaging chatter. E. H.

New Republic News

This issue of the *New Republic* marks the end of an era. Today, we pick up our soapbox and move over to another corner. The old pitch was a good one; we had plenty to say and the audience was with us. But the traffic has changed; the main crossroad is further downtown now. We have more to say, more listeners to hear us, to heed us. They themselves have voices which carry, through the farms, the factories, the communities and the homes.

We, too, will change. To counsel moderation in an immoderate world is not in itself enough; we cast our lot with a dynamic program of progressivism which will not merely twist a middle course but will break trail by itself.

Within this evolution, we still can't help feeling some twinges of nostalgia for the little physical things so comfortably familiar which pass away. The traditional cover will disappear. The new one will look brighter, in color. No more two-column pages; three columns will be the rule from now on. A new type face will be used. And the prose will be less leisurely. In short, a much brighter magazine in content and appearance.

• • •

Sam Stavisky was assistant city editor of the Washington *Post* when he entered the Marine Corps to serve three years as a combat correspondent. He has written for *Harper's* and *Nation's Business* and is now Veterans' Editor of the Washington *Post*.

Lawrence K. Rosinger, the Far Eastern Research Associate of the Foreign Policy Association, has recently returned from China.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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